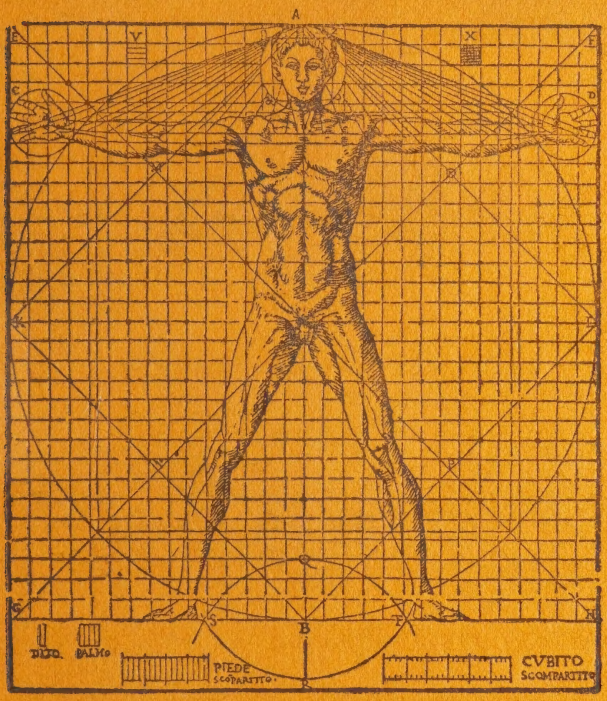
A LIVING THEATRE

THE GORDON CRAIG SCHOOL

THE ARENA GOLDONI

THE MASK



SETTING FORTH THE AIMS AND OBJECTS
OF THE MOVEMENT AND SHOWING
BY MANY ILLUSTRATIONS
THE CITY OF FLORENCE
THE ARENA.

FLORENCE
1913.

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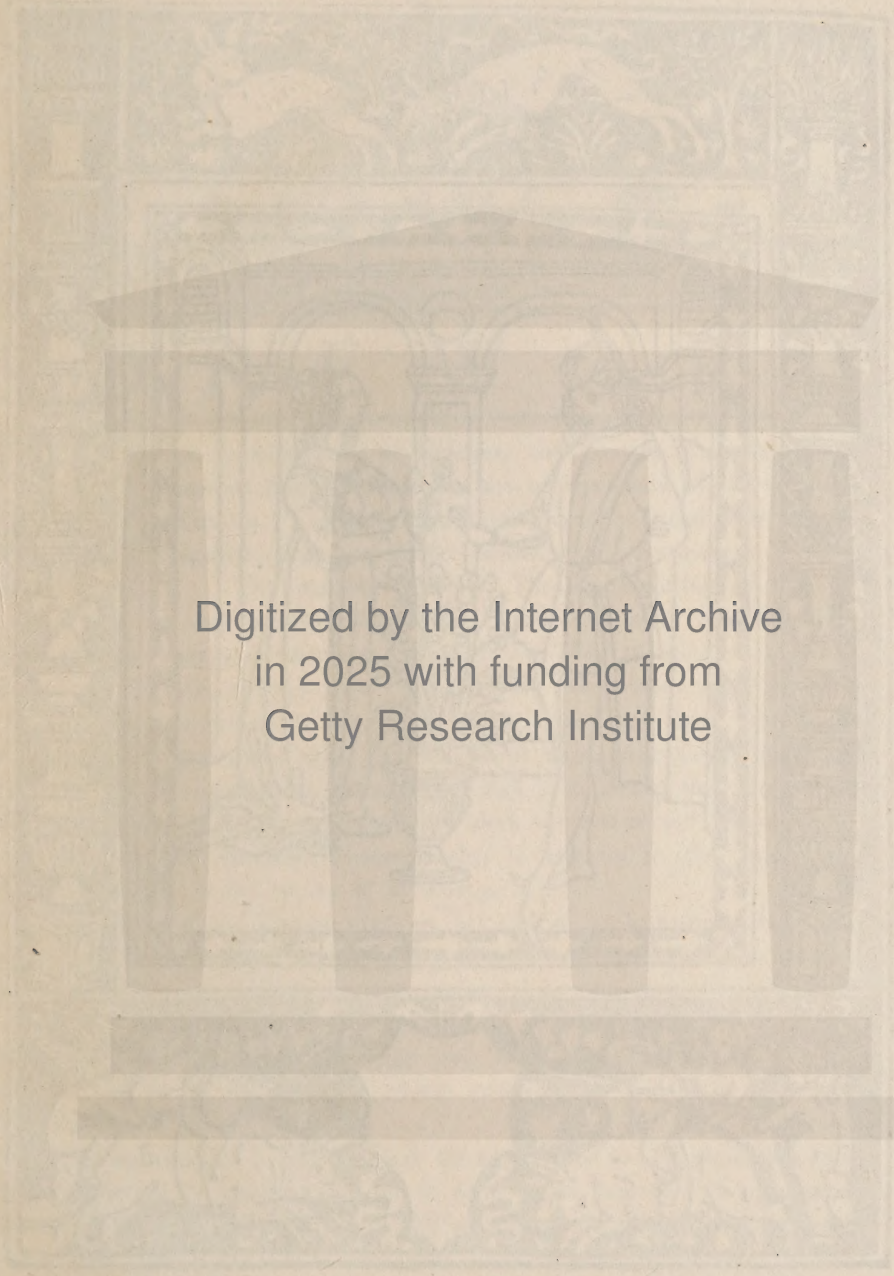

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ILLUSTRATION FROM "THE MASK" VOLUME TWO.

FOREWORD

THE popularisation of Ugliness, the bearing of false witness against Beauty—these are the achievements of the Realistic Theatre. I wish my school and Journal to stand as my protest against this anarchistic tendency of the modern Theatre.

The modern Realistic Theatre, forgetful of all the Laws of Art, sets out to reflect the times. It reflects a small particle of the times, it drags back a curtain and exposes to our view an agitated caricature of Man and his Life, a figure gross in its attitude and hideous to look upon.

This is true neither to life nor to art. It has never been the purpose of art to reflect and make uglier the ugliness of things, but to transform and make the already beautiful more beautiful, and, in following this purpose, art shields us with sweet influences from the dark sorrows of our weakness.

The modern Realistic Theatre helps to stir up in the people that restlessness which is the enemy of all things.

The duty of the Theatre (both as Art and as an Institution) is to awaken more calmness and more wisdom in mankind by the inspiration exhaling from its beauty.

Photographic and Phonographic Realism injure the minds of the people. They thrust upon them a grotesque and inaccurate representation of the outward and visible life, with the divine essence—the spirit—the beauty of life left out.

Unimportant is it what subject the artist turns to—his pleasure is to illumine all that he touches so that it shall shine brightly. A momentary glance at the works of the Masters will endorse the truth of the statement.

But this modern Realistic Theatre pays no heed to the Masters, even if it be aware of the existence of their works.

Realism contains the seeds of Revolt, and however much the heart of the man may lean with pity towards those whom fate seems to follow relentlessly, the artist must never lend his art, with its terrible power of appeal, towards the destruction of that just Balance which it is the aim of mankind to create and preserve. For there is no poison more swift than that which eats into the mind—this falsewitnessing Realism—this traitor of the imagination—this idolatry of ugliness to which the Realistic Theatre would compel us.

This thing first appeared in Paris, but only after 1798! For a time it flourished, but while exciting the mob it revolted the intelligent.

It then passed into Russia, into Germany, into Portugal and other restless places.

Neither in England nor America, nor yet in Ireland has it ventured—in these lands the Theatre often succeeds in its vulgarities without the aid of Realism.

Daring, and dangerous—it is a Revolt against the very Laws of the Art of the Theatre.

Daring because to *reproduce* nature is an impossibility.

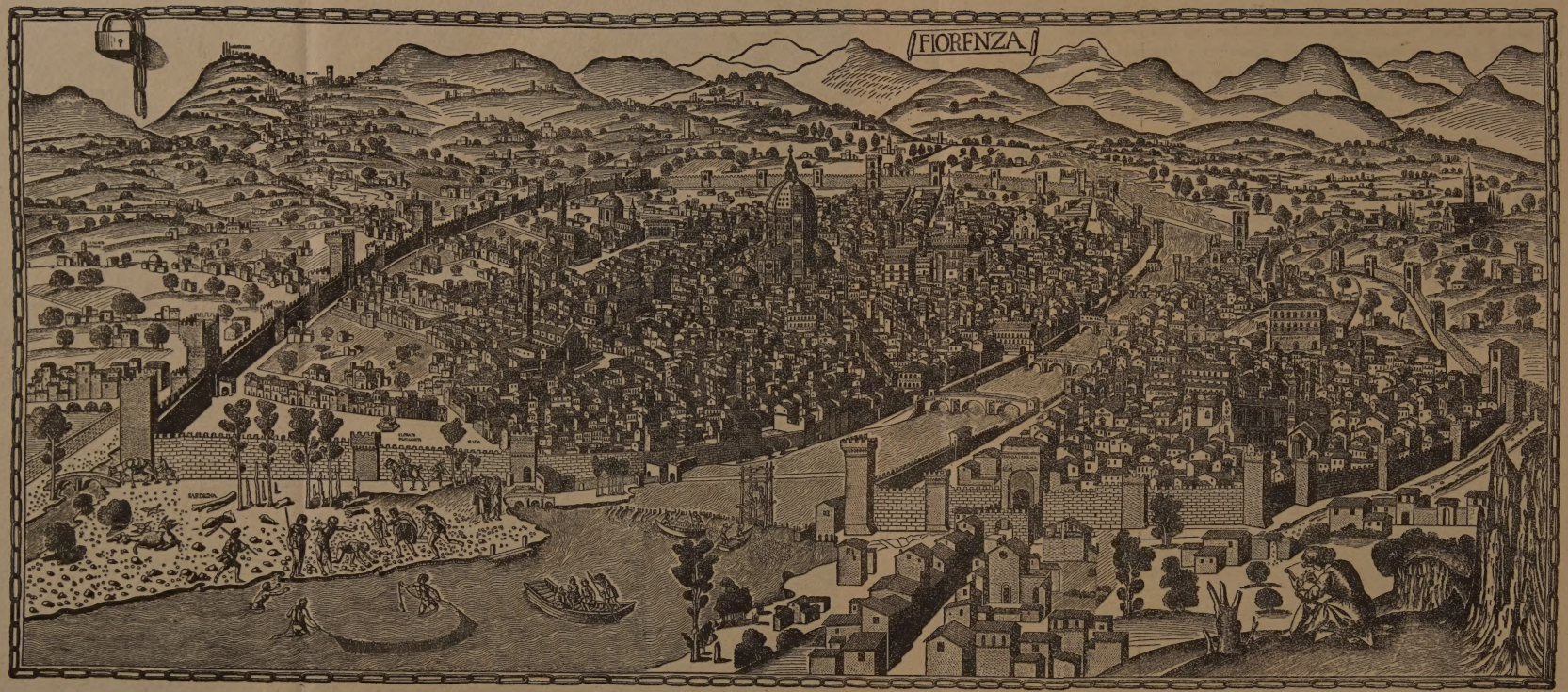
Dangerous, because it is a threat against the well-ordered life of the Citizen. Each whisper of Revolt finds an echo in the Theatre of Realism—the gloomy expressions, the shuffling movements—the dark and closed-in scenes—the spasmodic exclamations of the actors—the strange muffled atmosphere—all these things lend themselves to form one sinister impression.

Alas! all this is false and unworthy of the theatre, both as an institution of the realm and as an Art.

With the Freedom of the Theatre—free to select *what* it shall show—free from the tutorship of the other arts as to *how* it shall show—comes new hope.

Only by its freedom can its health be restored.

GORDON CRAIG.



PANORAMIC VIEW OF FLORENCE IN 1490. ENGRAVED ON WOOD IN THAT YEAR BY FRANCESCO ROSSELLI. REPRODUCTION BY GUGLIELMO VASORI, 1913.

THE CITY OF FLOWERS

LORENCE is Home. A real home and a magical one. Florence is like young Giotto in armour.

This is the City of whom an Italian writer says.

" Who can describe the enchanting view of this art-city of Tuscany " and the world, with its surrounding gardens? who paint the distant ho- " rizon, from Fiesole smiling at us with its fair towers, to the blue ridge " of the Lucca Mountains standing out against the golden background of the " western sky? Here everything betrays the work of generation after gene- " ration of ingenious men. Like a water-lily rising on the mirror of the lake, " so rests on this lovely ground the still more lovely Florence, with its ever- " lasting works and its inexhaustible riches. From the bold airy tower of " the palace, rising like a slender mast, to Brunelleschi's wondrous dome of " the Cathedral, from the old house of the Spini to the Pitti Palace, the " most imposing the world has ever seen, from the garden of the Franciscan " convent to the beautiful environs of the Cascine, all are full of an incom- " parable grace. Each street of Florence contains a world of art; the walls " of the city are the calyx containing the fairest flowers of the human mind; " — and this is but the richest gem in the diadem with which the Italian " people have adorned the earth. "

Did you not know, you might think this account hyperbolical; but we who live here can assure the less fortunate that it contains not one over-emphasised word. Florence is all this, and more, she is a sentient being, she breathes – she smiles; she is the Aspiration of a People made visible.

To live in Florence is like living in a village and a citadel at one and the same moment. In the air is an echo of martial songs sung with peasant earnestness. Vineyards and olive trees almost submerge the old walls built by Michael Angelo, and by others earlier than he. There are scars of ancient cannon-balls on the stones of the Palaces.

She is a little City in rich robes – from the tower in which I write I can see to their borders. Her houses and streets are spread out around like a map – and in very little indeed are they changed from those shown in the ancient map.

The streets are all paved with stone as in the tenth and the fifteenth centuries; you cross the bridge in the footsteps of Dante; you ride under giant archways with Lorenzo the Magnificent and his men; you learn of the tragedies of Guelph and Ghibeline beneath the very windows that witnessed them long ago. Here are churches and pictures world-famous, but the Soul of Florence outshines all her jewels and embroideries. She herself is greater, more extraordinary, than any of her single beauties.

Many a historian, many a tourist, knows the full list of her churches and pictures, but there is no one who knows Her, for Florence is inscrutable. No one has ever been known to grow tired of her. There is always some new thing to find in her. And so she is the only Home for those who come to Italy to stay.

A Gay City!

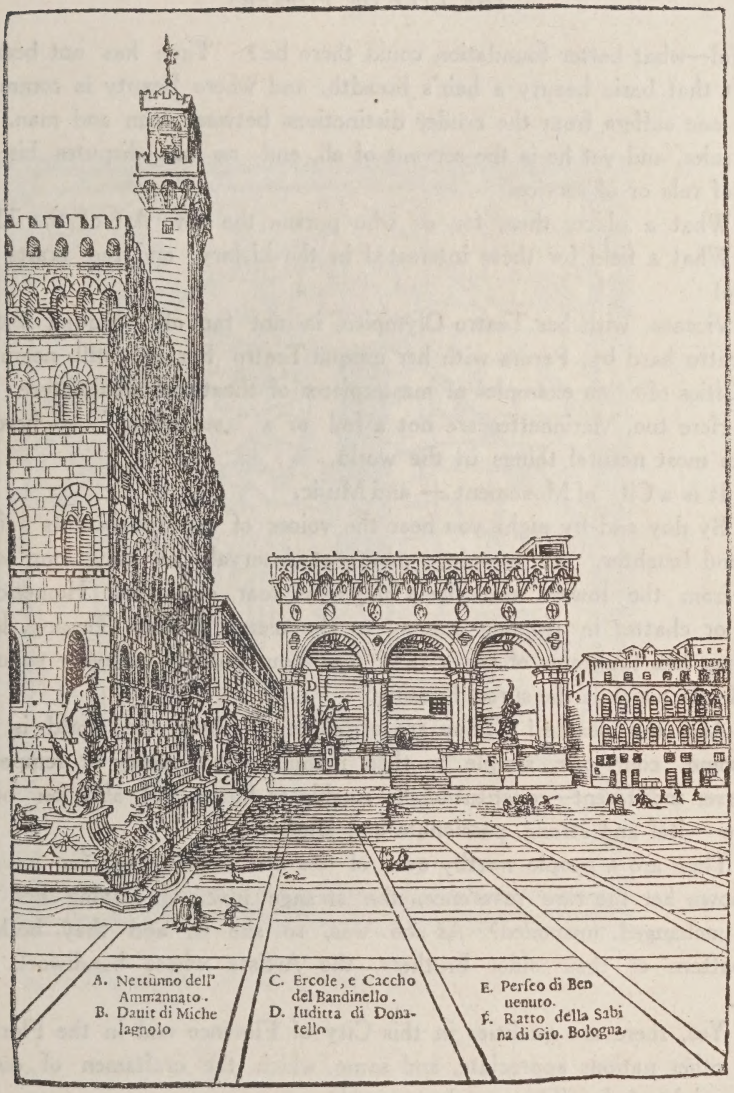
Paris with her supposed gaiety is a red-nosed and vulgar city by the side of this fantastic, poetic Enchanted Princess. In Paris, place of many Revolutions, rudeness is natural. In Florence, there are princes at every street corner – in all the by-ways. Her people have natural good breeding.

Actors spring from the soil here, instead of through traps in a stage or the drawing rooms of the wealthy. Great Italian actors unknown to London, Paris and Berlin visit Florence all the year round. In the very streets excitement creates the Drama for us. Every shop with its craftsmen working in the open doorway, singing their favourite songs as in the olden time, (and the songs are enchanting) is the scene of a drama. Drama played by a City of Actors on the open-air stage – Drama delicate and amusing – Drama ever so refined and lastingly humourous. Comedians in the piazzas – Comedians on the steps by the river – Comedians on the bridges – down the alleys – in the market-places – everywhere! Delicate comedy all the time, and now and then a very little fierce tragedy.

The doors all stand open here, Why close them, unless you fear the intrusion of a savage? There is good fellowship in the air—a natural courtesy breeds it. Florence achieves a distinction attained by no other City or People in all the centuries—she created an ideal Socialism.

Or if not she—who has done this?

I do not doubt that the Artists of old time laid once and for ever the solid foundations upon which their children built. They made all things


A. Nettunno dell' Ammannato.
B. Dauit di Michelagnolo
C. Ercole, e Cacco del Bandinello.
D. Iuditta di Donatello
E. Perseo di Benuenuto.
F. Ratto della Sabina di Gio. Bologna.

PALAZZO VECCHIO - FLORENCE.

beautiful—what better foundation could there be? Time has not been able to shift that basic beauty a hair's breadth, and where Beauty is common to all, no one suffers from the cruder distinctions between man and man. The Artist rules, and yet he is the servant of all, and no one disputes his rights either of rule or of service.

What a place, then, for us who pursue the new Art of the Theatre!

What a field for those interested in the history and the crafts of the Theatre!

Vicenza with her Teatro Olympico is not far off; Verona with her Amfiteatro hard by; Parma with her unique Teatro Farnese still nearer. All three Cities offer us examples of masterpieces of theatrical architecture.

Here too, Marionettes are not a fad or a "sensation" — here they are the most natural things in the world.

It is a City of Movement — and Music.

By day and by night you hear the voices of the inhabitants raised in song and laughter. At morning—noon—at intervals all day long do the bells from the towers and the Campanile roar out their Homeric greetings, or chatter in rippling ecstasy to the merry throng. Tossing, leaping, swinging, like fountains of silver rain they pour out joy on every wind—that Joy of Life which is the surest blessing.

And the people! They are a people of whom the world is proud. Handsome, courteous, simple in their manners—sad, merry or tempestuous, but never indifferent—constitutionally unable to hurry, but able on occasion to race—vital and strong, passionate and kindly.

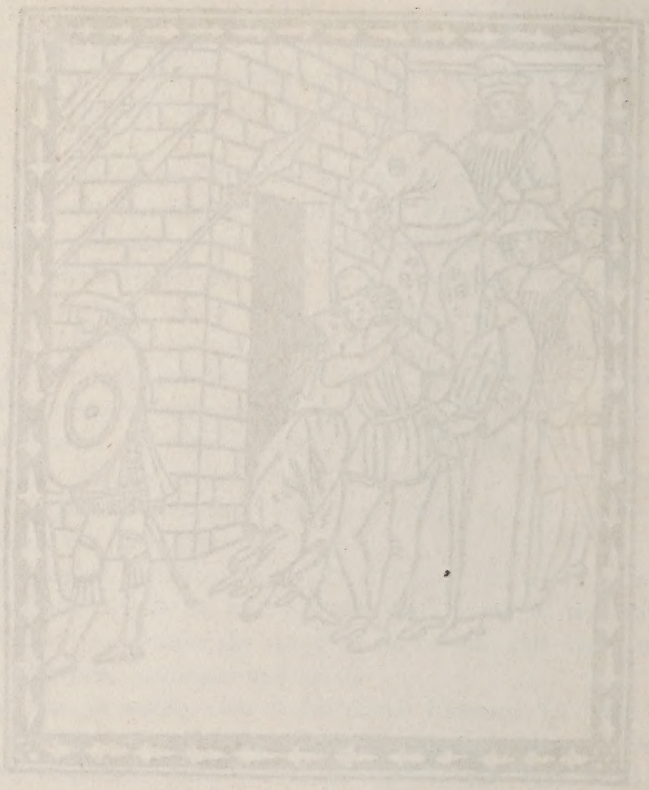
They are a people worthy even of this divine Florence; for have they not shown her the rare reverence, the strange love, of leaving her untouched, unchanged, unspoiled? As she was, so she is, and they build after the pattern of their elder brothers, the Artists whose handiwork is her crown.

Yes, there are qualities in this City of Florence and in the Florentines which other nations appreciate, and some which the craftsmen of our own nation might *study*. They can learn much.

For this reason, if for no other, Florence is the right centre for *The School for the Art of the Theatre* and for *The Mask*. She is the true home of all those who desire to create.

JOHN BALANCE.

ILLUSTRATION FROM "THE MASK" VOL. IV.



ABOUT "THE MASK"

UBLISHED in English in Florence, and numbering among its contributors young writers from almost every country of importance in the world, the position of *The Mask* among the journals of today is a unique one, while its character, position and aim, differing as they do from those of all other journals, lend to it an individuality that places it in a sphere alone.

The Mask has the distinction of being the first, and only really serious, journal in the English language devoted to the Art of the Theatre, for, while the other arts of Architecture, Sculpture, Music and Painting had long had their several journals, no one had come forward to remove from the Theatre the reproach of being unrepresented until this magazine was founded by Mr Gordon Craig. Since then it has been the one journal which has treated of the Theatre in a serious and distinguished manner, according to it its rightful position among its sister arts.

The Mask has now completed its fifth year and entered upon its sixth,... a matter of no little satisfaction to those who, responsible for its birth in March 1908, were on that occasion told almost unanimously by both Press and Public that so audacious a bantling could not possibly survive six months.

There were several reasons, however, why it could not be so easily quashed.

One was that it did not exist for its own sake but for an idea, and a true idea, and the activity of Truth is irrepressible, and a right principle, once set going, does not stop short upon the way. Another reason was the enthusiasm of those who had the care of it, for, whatever the sceptics may say, a grain of enthusiasm can remove mountains of difficulty.

THE INFLUENCE OF FLORENCE.

third reason was that it was in Florence that *The Mask* was started, and has always had its home. *The Mask* owes much to Florence for the vitality which she has unsparingly poured into it through those whose work it was to write its articles and correct its proofs and solve its problems and master its difficulties and perform the thousand and one offices required to keep a young journal, endowed with few of this world's goods, healthily alive.

And certainly *The Mask* needed all that Florence had to give it, for it started and lived through difficulties enough to daunt even the most determined. It started without capital, with but few friends to welcome it, with many enemies eager to see it come to an untimely end.

In London, in Berlin, in Paris, it could hardly have survived at all, for it lived literally by the enthusiasm of those who worked for it, and London, Berlin and Paris have a way of stifling enthusiasm unless capitalized. Those cities do not rise up and slay the enthusiast who troubles their comfortable lethargy; they only weave around him, ever so gently, cloud upon cloud, fold upon fold of heavy mental and atmospheric grey; and gradually the keen grasp slackens, activity becomes passivity and the mesmerism is complete.

But in Florence there is nothing of all that Florence gives generously, as she has ever done, to her artists, her enthusiasts, and, having made possible so many achievements through so many centuries, she has, by her graciousness, made possible yet another,.... the survival of *The Mask*.

WHAT THE MASK STANDS FOR.

E who are associated with *The Mask* are often asked what it is the journal stands for, why it is of such importance that it should have survived while other journals appear, live out a few issues, and then die.

The answer is simple. *The Mask*, as has been already said, stands for an IDEA, and an IDEA is a rare thing; is, together with its exponents and adherents, of value and worthy of respect.

The IDEA in obedience to which *The Mask* was founded was that of a New Theatre which should replace the existing one; an IDEA which, conceived rapidly, needs time to develop naturally: its purpose was to support and advance and link together that group of younger men in the European Theatre who are devoting their lives to the realisation of that Idea. Thus *The Mask* is not an isolated fact; it is part of an organic whole, another part of that whole being the School for the Art of the Theatre, also started in Florence, also brought into being for the realisation of the same IDEA.... the creation of a new Theatre.

Both work together towards this end: the one is a part of the other and the other is a part of the one, and their work is both destructive and constructive.

THE DESTRUCTIVE WORK OF THE MASK.

UCH of the destructive work of *The Mask* is directed against the evils which today so blind the eyes of, not only the public, but of the men of the Theatre themselves as to prevent them from seeing that the house in which they are at present living is but a modern jerry-built affair of a few hundred years, raised upon a most rank and evil-smelling swamp, and that any repair of it is futile: and that only one thing remains for them to do,... to move off on to higher healthier ground, to get out into the sun and air and there set about the creation of a new house in which everything, in obedience to the noble traditions of the past and an enlightened vision of the future, shall be fresh and beautiful and the old rubbish left behind.

Among the evils which *The Mask* attacks to that end are Realism, Vulgarity, Commercialism and the trade spirit, Pedantry, Theatricalism, the aggressive personality of the actor, the star system, badly built theatres, the invasion of the theatre by other artists, the system of actor managers, the representation of ugliness, the acceptance of mere " effectiveness " as a substitute for thoroughness in all branches of the profession, the selfish apathy and cowardice which would oppose all progress or reform lest it should militate against personal prosperity and personal ease.

In attacking these evils *The Mask* held it right to take its stand upon the fine tradition of an early day, proving that, although that which it upholds

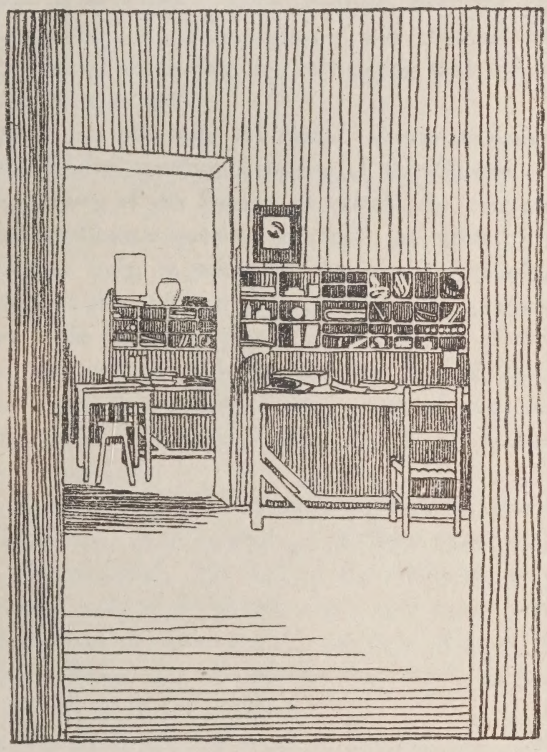
is called the *New Movement*, it is really a movement as ancient as the Theatre itself; that, although it may seem rash and revolutionary compared with the new " tradition " of yesterday which it would sweep aside, it is but the logical sequence of the real tradition; that is, the best practise and most thoughtful conviction of the greatest artists, the most sincere workers, the most serious thinkers on these subjects in all ages and all lands. To this end it cites as witnesses thinkers and men of action whose authority cannot be questioned, and shows how these men in their day attacked the very evils which the new group in the awakening European Theatre attacks today.

THE CONSTRUCTIVE WORK OF THE MASK.

T has been said that the work of *The Mask* is constructive as well as destructive. Looking ever towards the future it aims to go forwards instead of backwards, to support progress, not retrogression ; to occupy itself with a living future, not a dead past ; to change paralysis to activity, lethargy to enthusiasm. Not only does it fight against the continued exhibition of the embalmed corpse of the Theatre, tricked out, galvanized into spasmodic and awkward movement, which takes place nightly upon the stages of all the theatres.... exhibitions organised by the commercialists, the trust supporters; but it would aid the party which it represents in clearing the old theatres away altogether and in laying the foundations of the New Theatre which is to be.

It thus makes it its work to spread ideas among the young men of the theatre so that, after they have torn down, they shall know how to build up ; when they have buried the dead body they shall know how to evoke the new spirit, so that it may inhabit and vitalise the new form.

To this end *The Mask* presents and urges lines of thought and study against which the old theatre has long shut its ears. Nor are they hastily conceived ideas which it offers, for it can be shown that these ideas have the support of the most intelligent of all ages ; and that is why we are not content in *The Mask* to claim credence only for the artists of today, for Balance, Carric, Craig, Hevesi, Salvini, Baltrushaitis, Mackaye, Symons, Yeats, and the rest merely on their merits as lifelong students of and workers in the



OFFICES OF "THE MASK" *G. NELSON.*

Theatre, but rather show them as the modern exponents of the truths asserted by the representative men of the past, and in enforcing their arguments, claim as their adherents Plato, Aristotle, Goethe, Schlegel, Flaubert, Nietzsche, Lamb, Hazlitt, Tolstoi, Blake, Shakespeare and many more: we cite these men as proof that the present movement is in no way rash and revolutionary, but the logical development of a fine tradition, since the experts of an earlier day, those accepted by all as " grave and reverend signiors " of ripe judgement, are found supporting and advocating that which the younger men would do and see done today.

The Mask has also been the first,.... always pursuing this same aim.... to remind the English speaking branches of the Theatre of certain splendid phases in the history of the Theatre of which the existence had been forgotten or the significance ignored; to recall the great period of the Commedia dell'Arte in Italy, to point out the vital relationship of the history of marionettes in the past and their place in the present as indicative of their position in the future, to search out the records of the old Sacre Rappresentazioni, to see the inherent promise in the Tuscan Maggi Plays. On these subjects it has published the writing of such experts or scholars as Luigi Riccoboni, Gherardi, Gozzi, Yorick (P. Ferrigni), Dr. Michele Scherillo, Dr. Cesare Levy.

Many of these names of themselves offer an additional reason why *The Mask* could not have existed,.... at least could not have been just what it is,.... out of Italy. For Italy is the storehouse of these things and it is Italians who write of them with most enthusiasm. Not only are the libraries and archives of every city,.... Florence, Parma, Mantua, Bologna, Vicenza, Venice, Milan, full of records, but the spirit of Drama itself yet lives in the daily lives of the people.

Again, *The Mask* has not merely concerned itself with the history of the past but with the activities of the present, having been the first to bring to the English-speaking Theatre news of many of the men whose names have afterwards become household words in London and New York. Who, for instance, before *The Mask* did so, had written of Grasso and the Sicilians, of the work of Stanislawsky in Moscow, of Wyspiansky in Poland or of Hevesi in Budapest? who, except Arthur Symons, had written in any way adequately or intelligently of the work and Idea of Gordon Craig?

But we have said that *The Mask* is not an independent unit but part of a whole; and so, while we in *The Mask* say these things, study them and send news of them to those who, scattered all over the world, are yet at one in spirit with this movement, the School is practising, experimenting, giving form and substance to all which *The Mask* for six years has been saying, actualising that for which *The Mask* has prepared the way. Thus Practise and Theory, Theory and Practise act and react, and each confirms and strengthens the other.

The Mask and the School then, both standing for one Idea, each in its individual way but neither independently of the other, work for the realisation of that Idea. It is in this unity that lies their strength, for today, as in previous years, there are still those who are against us as well as those who are on our side, although, as the old game of " Oranges and Lemons " goes on, and the question is put, " which side are you on? " the number at our back grows ever stronger and the opposing forces against which we have to pull grow less.

Still, some do still remain on the other side and it may be just as well to set down who they are.

They are those for whom a Theatrical Trust is a matter on a par with a Beef Trust and who therefore naturally object to *The Mask* and its independent ways: they are the apathetic, those in the rut who care nothing to get out, and those who are quite satisfied with the present degenerate conditions in the Theatre and think that any desire for other things is much ado about nothing. They are the theatrical capitalists and stage managers whose methods it denounces and whose position it assails. They are, alas, those old actors who, forgetful of the-tradition they so loudly talk of, close their ears to all truths which might destroy their self-complacency and rouse an uncomfortable discontent with the methods they have followed and which they are either too ignorant to question or too lazy and cowardly to change. They are the actresses, since the majority of these charming ladies want to know no more than that which concerns their little daily round of going down to the theatre and coming back at night.

But then those who are for us are infinitely stronger than those who are against us, because enthusiasm has ever the pull over apathy, keenness for an Idea is more fruitful than keenness for a selfish aim, the adherent of a

principle is stronger than the bolsterer-up of a prejudice. Those who are on our side are the ones worth having; they are the men and women who count. On our side we have all the young athletic spirits in the Theatre; that ever-growing group of men who are pledged to restore the Theatre, so long degraded, to the high position among its sister arts which is its just inheritance. We have the keen and the courageous and those who are not afraid of some personal loss through the triumph of an Idea. And it is just because *The Mask* and the School lead instead of following the trend of affairs that they are supported by these young men, who press forward, while the old ones, too deeply sunk in the rut of convention, are left behind. *But it must be understood that by "old" are meant those old in heart and mind, not in body; for some of those old in years but young in spirit are among the keenest workers for the future and the warmest supporters of the cause.*

But now, after writing of that for which *The Mask* stands, a word should be said as to the journal itself. And here modesty tells us to leave others to speak for us; still we are glad that they like us.... and, that they do so, seems evident, since this is what some of them say.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* says, "*The Mask* always contains something worth reading and often something worth keeping. There is not a page in it which is not interesting and stimulating in a fine way". The *Westminster Gazette* says, "A quite remarkable magazine, rich in intelligence". The *Daily Telegraph* says, "A very amusing and stimulating, as well as a most beautiful magazine". The *New Age* says that "If *The Mask* is fractious it is also loveable" while from America comes the declaration "*The Mask* is the finest magazine of its kind in the world".

So that if you, who are reading this, like these qualities in a journal, and if you do not already know *The Mask*, why, make it your friend as fast as you can; come over and be one of us, until you can say, like Madame Yvette Guilbert, "*The Mask* is MY journal".

Many others say the same. There are American friends who visit Europe who come over especially to see us; there are Germans too who come; Russians and Poles, Hungarians, Swedes, Dutch, and even Parisians now and then. All are welcome, and you will be welcome too.

Come then and you will find yourself in good and gay company; you

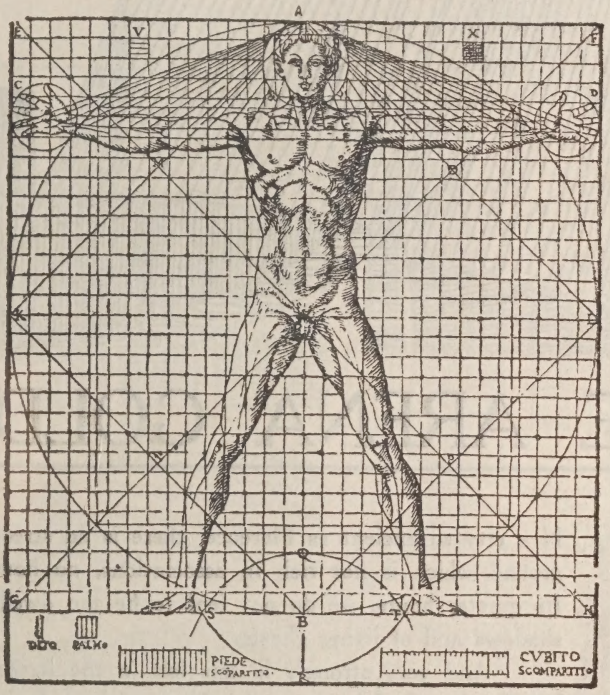
will find yourself part of a Movement which will give that zest to life which over in England so many seem to miss. Of course you cannot all of you come and join us here in Italy; we know that. But we will undertake to send you in every number something of the spirit and gaiety and keenness and hopefulness which quicken life here, and we guarantee that this spirit shall reach you fresh and unspoiled through the medium of the printed page.

HOW TO GET "THE MASK".

NOW perhaps you, reading this over in Belgravia or Bow, or down in Leicester or Liverpool, say to yourself, " I like that, I want that.... but how to get it? ", for it seems to you as if it must be more difficult to become a subscriber to a magazine which comes all the way from Florence than to one which comes from Covent Garden or Paternoster Row. Well, it is very simple, and you can do it yourself or tell your bookseller to do it for you. Put a check or postal order for fifteen shillings.... less than the *Daily Mail*, less than a half penny a day (our boast!),.... made payable to *The Mask* Publishers, into an envelope, enclose your name and address and a line saying " I wish to subscribe to the sixth volume of *The Mask* " and send it to *The Mask* Publishers, Arena Goldoni, Florence, Italy, or to The Secretary, Society of the Theatre, 7 John St. Adelphi, London.... whichever you like. If you live in London and want to ask any questions you have only to ring up the Secretary of the Society on the Telephone (Regent 1601) and you will be told anything you wish to know.

If you want a finer edition, broader margins, a yet more beautiful page, then send twenty shillings instead of fifteen, and the " Large Paper Edition ", limited to two hundred copies, will be with you in the twinkling of an eye.

D. NEVILE LEES.



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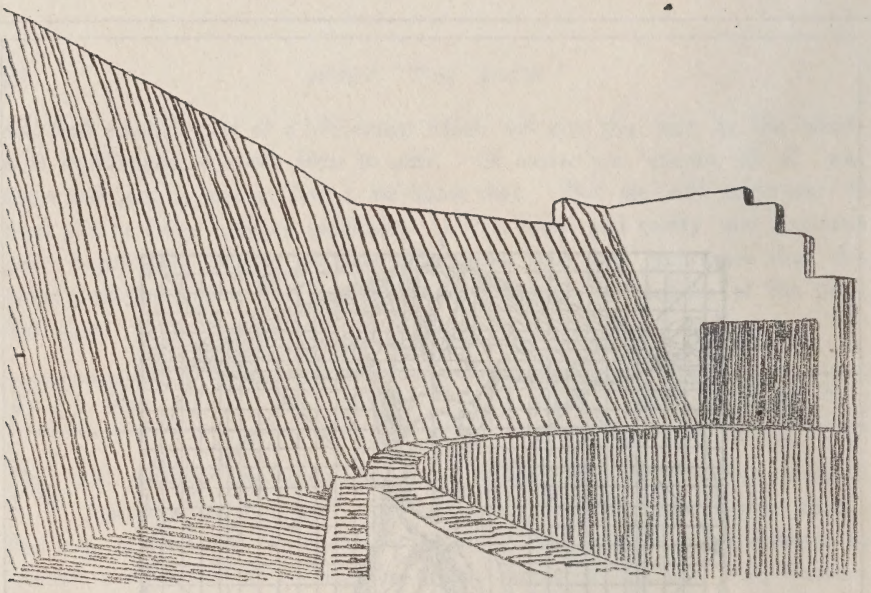
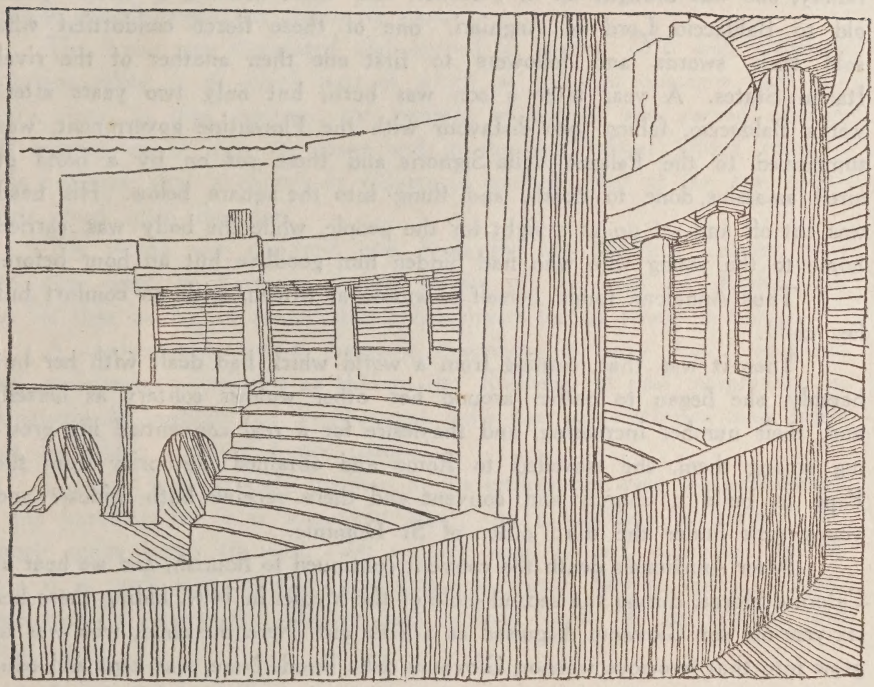


THE ARENA GOLDONI

N a city so ancient as Florence, there is no street or space of ground which is not rich in associations, no house which, in its quieter hours, we do not feel to be the dwelling of sweet shadows and of living ghosts.

And very strongly is this felt in the Arena Goldoni, Mr Gordon Craig's open air theatre, where, for the past five years *The Mask* has had its offices, and in which the *School for the Art of the Theatre* now has its home.

The Arena Goldoni is undoubtedly one of the loveliest open-air theatres today existing. It is beautiful architecturally, rich in associations and in the traditions of a dignified and tranquil past. On the stage and in the adjoining rooms are traces of ecclesiastical architecture,... vaulted ceilings, carved capitals, remainders of lofty arches, survivals of the cloister which once occupied this site. For here, their buildings and gardens together covering about 140,000 square feet of ground, were the convents of Annalena and of Santa Chiara, of which the larger and most important seems to have been that founded by Annalena, whose tragic story is typical of the turbulent times in which she lived.



THE ARENA GOLDONI *G. NELSON.*

THE STORY OF THE CONVENT OF ANNALENA - 1443.

Born in 1428, a daughter of Galeotto Malatesta of the great Rimini family, she was brought up in Florence, and there married at twelve years old to Baldaccio Lord of Anghiari, one of those fierce condottieri who sold their swords and followers to first one then another of the rival Italian States. A year later a son was born, but only two years afterwards Baldaccio, falling into disfavour with the Florentine government, was summoned to the Palazzo della Signoria and there set on by a band of hired assassins, done to death, and flung into the square below. His head was cut off and set up as a sight for the people, while the body was carried home to the young wife who had bidden him goodbye but an hour before.

Thus Annalena found herself a widow at fifteen, with no comfort but her child.

Then it was that, turning from a world which had dealt with her but harshly, she began to gather around her other widows solitary as herself; and, their number increasing, and the desire for a real conventual life growing among them, she travelled to Rome and obtained authority from the Pope to build a church and convent and there receive both widows and young girls under the third order of St Dominic.

After Annalena's death the convent continued to flourish, and we hear of Caterina Sforza, during the second exile of the Medici in 1494, hiding there her six-year-old son Giovanni disguised as a little girl. Here the child, who was to grow into that ferocious warrior, Giovanni delle Bande Nere, was kept and educated for eight months; and since he became later the father of Cosimo I and of all the Medicean line of Dukes, which gave a queen to France, it may be claimed that the Sisterhood, in saving his life, was writing History in large.

A CHANGE - 1818 - THE ARENA OPENS.

The calm life of the nuns seem to have continued until the beginning of the nineteenth century, when, after the suppression of many of the religious orders, the convent buildings entirely changed their aspect and their aims, and we read that " a clever and courageous *intraprendente*, Signor

"Luigi Gargani, purchased them with the view of founding there an esta-"blishment which should unite various kinds of decent diversions for every "season of the year, his scheme comprising an Arena, a closed theatre, "gardens, billiard and ball rooms and other places of amusement", the whole being "dedicated to the immortal Carlo Goldoni, from whom the " whole establishment has taken its name".

The Arena was completed and opened in spring, 1818 and, although historians differ as to which part of which of the two convents had formerly stood in that position, the remains of pillars and carved capitals still existing on or near the stage and in the auditorium afford indisputable evidence that a church or cloister of one or other of the two sisterhoods stood upon this site.

The Arena was designed and built by the architect Corazzi, who afterwards went to Varsovie in the service of the Czar of Russia, and was his first work,... ä remarkable achievement for so young a man.

A contemporary writer, Gargiolli, describing it, says that " tout cela "est parfaitement conforme au théâtre des Romains et doit surprendre les "amateurs de l'antique qui n'entrouvent nulle part une imitation aussi fidèle " et aussi bien appuyée à nos usages".

Gargiolli was certainly justified in his enthusiasm over the architecture of the building, for it is a comely place. Its proportions are perfect. Although quite large, (it seats 1500 people), one is not conscious of its size; it is well knit together and does not sprawl like so many modern amphitheatres. It is the strong and original work of an original and gifted mind.

THE AUDIENCES IN 1818.

Of the performances given in the Arena at the period of its construction little record remains, but it seems to have been a democratic theatre, frequented by a gay and riotous audience whose exuberant spirits frequently found vent in demonstrations for which "horse-play" would be too mild a term, and which at times required the intervention of soldiers with fixed bayonets before peace could be restored.

THE ARENA TODAY - 1913.

But now, as the quiet nuns before them, these riotous jovial crowds have gone their way, and the Arena has entered upon another phase of its existence, a phase of quiet ordered activity, of keen enthusiasm, of preparation for great things to be.

All day the imperious Tuscan sun pours down upon the circular tiers of stone seats, upon the pillared loggia which crowns them, and upon the white walls above which cut in sharp contrast against the intense blue of the Italian sky. The lizards bask undisturbed on the hot stones and run up and down the columns unafraid. From the garden beyond comes the music of the songbirds, the whirr of the cicale, and a little murmur of windstirred leaves.

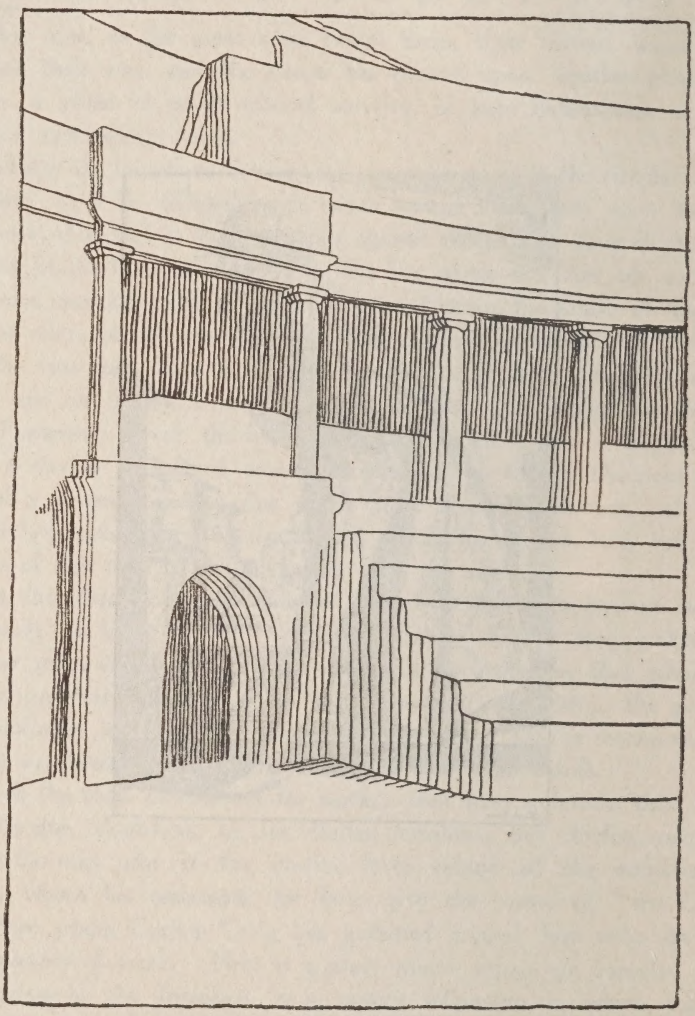
The two immediate impressions which one receives on entering the building are its unexpectedness and its beauty. On coming in from the narrow Florentine street the first impression created is one of exquisite surprise,.... of having discovered some beautiful secret thing. The next impression is of a profound peace, due partly to a certain quietness and dignity in the architecture, partly, to the silence, which, for all the keen and varied activities of the many workers, reigns over the whole.

As the door closes the noise of the street seems to become suddenly very remote, to be separated from one by more than a stout oaken door and a few yards of dusky passage, rather is it separated by that infinite gulf which by material calculation may be but a hand's breadth.... the gulf between confusion and order, restlessness and calm. One is conscious of a particular exhilarating atmosphere, so soon as one steps inside.

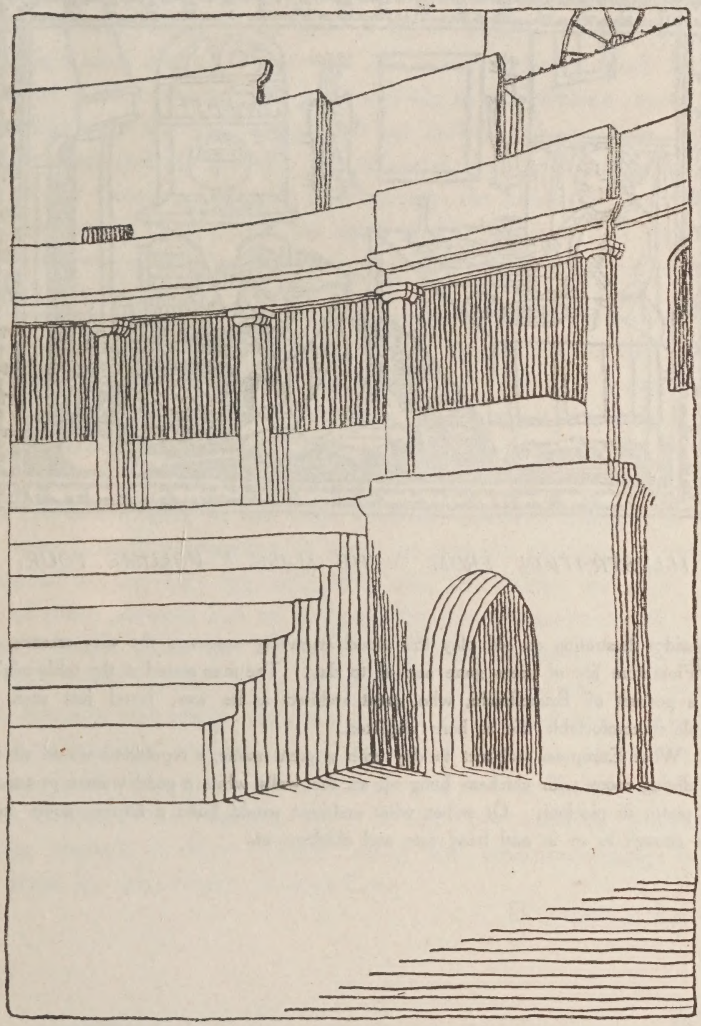
It is the ideal atmosphere for work,... that busy quietude, that joyousness partly due, doubtless, to the Italian sunshine, but chiefly, unquestionably, to the man who is the motive force behind all the activities, the leader to whom his assistants, for love, give the name of " the Chief ".

Those whom Gordon Craig has gathered around him seem instigated by an ecstacy of work. Here is a place where things go happily, for all the sharpness of the discipline, in a cheery fellowship in which the jolly Tuscan carpenters and bricklayers, like gay children, share; and it is just this spirit of keenness, this enthusiasm for the cause, this passion for good work which carries projects to completion and brings purposes to pass.

ILLUSTRATION FROM "THE MASK". VOLUME III. A DESIGN BY JACQUES CALLOT. AN ITALIAN ACTOR (PROBABLY PELLESINI) AS PANTALONE. 1616.



THE ARENA GOLDONI.



1 9 1 3 G. NELSON.

ILLUSTRATION FROM " THE MASK " VOLUME FOUR.

Besides illustrating an old play this wood engraving expressed the very essence of Florentine life of years gone and of to day. The man seated at the table might be a portrait of Brunelleschi, who, great architect as he was, loved just such a simple if comfortable life as here depicted.

What European architect to day with a great name, a reputation would sit in his dining room with chickens hung up on the walls while a good woman prepared his piatto di piccioni. Or rather what architect would build a kitchen noble and nice enough to sit in and hang care and chickens in.

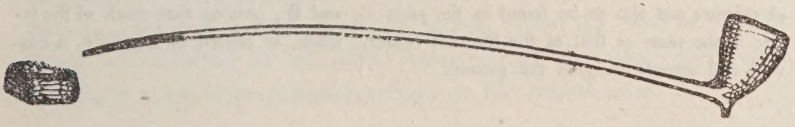
And is not the Arena, of all others, not only by its architectural qualities but by its history, an ideal place as centre for that reanaissance of the Art of the Theatre which is the aim of those working there? For is not Gordon Craig's ideal for the Theatre of the Future that it shall be a place no less sacred in its character, no less uplifting in its influence upon the national life than were the great temples of an earlier day,.... those temples in which were celebrated the stately and splendid and exhilarating ceremonies in praise of the Creation; the old thanksgiving, the hurrah for existence and in which the symbols of all things on earth and in Nirvana, had their place?

COLLABORATION AFOOT.

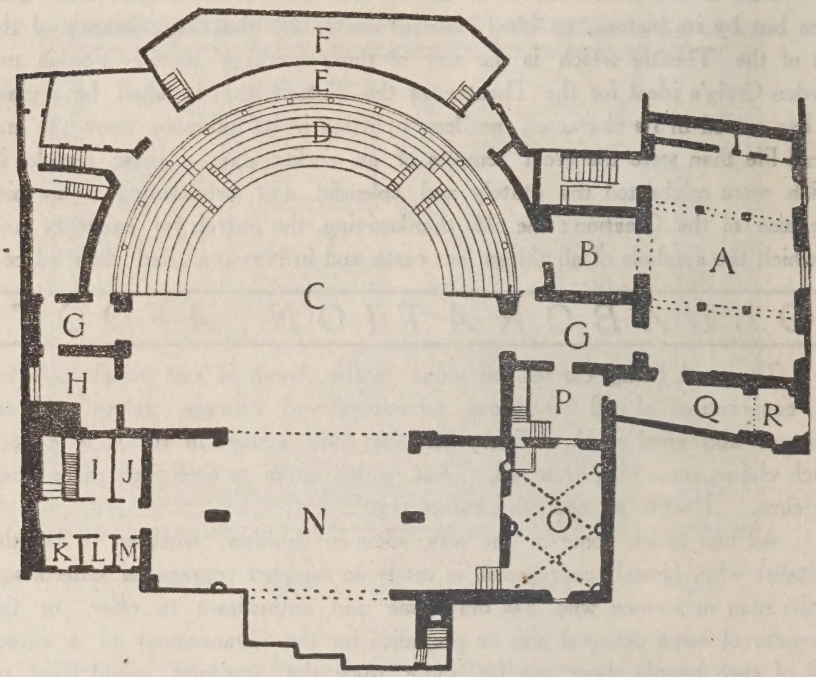
The work being carried on today in the Arena is one which calls for the cooperation of all who love adventure and courage, gaiety and seriousness and good work. Every one can have a share in it: it is a work which claims something from all,.... but which gives to each far more than it claims. I write as one who knows this.

All can assist, some in one way, some in another, whether it be the capitalist who, himself courageous, is ready to support courageous enterprises, or the man or women who has only time and enthusiasm to offer, or the urrender of some personal aim or prejudice for the advancement of a cause. And of such people there are far more than the pessimist would have us fancy. The world has not grown so old yet that courage and generosity and large interests and noble enthusiasms are dead, and those inspired by these forces will sooner or later,.... and we think sooner,.... find their way, in spirit and good fellowship and cooperation if not in bodily presence, to the Arena Goldoni; will become part of that ever-growing number who are moving towards a New Theatre, along the uncompromising lines laid down for them by their leader, Gordon Craig.

D. NEVILE LEES.



GROUND PLAN OF THE ARENA GOLDONI



A ENTRANCE HALL
B ANTE ROOM
C ARENA
D SCALINATA
E LOGGIA
F GALLERY
G CARPENTERS ROOMS
H VVOODCARVERS ROOMS
I OFFICE
J LIBRARY
K, L } STORE ROOMS
M PHOTOGRª ROOM
N STAGE
O MECHANICS SHOP
P COVRTYARD
Q PASSAGES
R STAGE DOOR

In the above Plan of the Arena Goldoni the parts marked C. D. E. and. F. are all open to the air. The stage, (N) is roofed over, but open at the front: at the back of it may be seen traces of the ancient ecclesiastical architecture of the earlier buildings. In the room marched O. the original columns may be seen marked round the walls, and the vaulting of the ceiling is also indicated. Traces of a continuation of this arcade of columns are also to be found in the parts G. and B., proving that much of the fabric is the same as that of the fifteenth century, when, as related on page 24, a convent and church occupied this ground.

THE PATH OF GORDON CRAIG

by D.R GEORGE BALTRUSHAITIS.

E PUR SI MUOVE — GALILEO (1).

THE most unjust burden which can be inflicted by Destiny upon the soul of an Artist is that of finding himself constrained, instead of creating and creating, to demonstrate to man the vitality of his creative work, to persuade people of the truth of his prophetic vision.

Because successfully to demonstrate, especially in matters of art, it is too often necessary to make the blind to see, while to persuade it is almost always necessary to make the deaf to hear.

But such a burden becomes supremely unjust if the artist, instead of creating and only creating, is compelled to seek among men the instrument and all the material of his art.

This is the case with Gordon Craig. And until such time as his dream shall be realised he can find some consolation in the fact that very many among the great have travelled this same way. The door of humanity is closely barred even though there should knock upon it the very hand which carries truth and life. But in the Eternal Book it is written, " knock and it shall be opened ".

When Craig began his great campaign of reform the very life of the European theatre was in extreme confusion, and, as an art, it had lost all sense of direction and all intrinsic value. While Poetry, Painting, Sculpture, and even the most permanent among the arts, Architecture, have now long since discovered the only way for their true development, and while in them youth, and the enormous power of the new elements and the new forms, of the new purposes and the new means, have reblossomed to the full, the theatre has continued in its glorious way to be ever the last, a safe refuge as aesthetic system; for the senseless, for false and dead realism.

Such fidelity on the part of the theatre to the " good old days ", such blind persistence in its error and decrepitude seems the more strange and ridiculous in that the general Renaissance through the spirit of the new life was no haphazard thing, was not based upon the will or caprice of individuals, but resulted as the direct consequence from the other, more profound and more mysterious, transfigurations in the human soul.

(1) " All the same it moves ".

All the manifold activity and the age-long development of the forces of culture and all the subjective experience of men have contributed to this end:.... that our mind has changed its character, and our senses have become more acute, more subtle and complex, and our very soul is changed past recognition.

And today we all, even the most careless, see things differently: our thoughts are of other things; our way of life is changed. Nay, more, all the secret activities of our human will have entered into a new and more fruitful relationship with the Universe, and our faith, our prayer, our conception of God are no longer those of heretofore.

This, and this only, has produced all the changes in the mind of man and in his Art, and from this wave in the universal awakening and the universal revolt of the spirit has come forth Gordon Craig.

His uncompromising attitude is immoveable because the reformer in him takes its stand upon the facts of life itself as executor of its irresistable will, as creative instrument of its eternal movement. And the enemies of Craig should bear in mind that it is not he, Gordon Craig, but Nature itself, the liberated soul, that is in conflict with them.

He alone has first, and more clearly than any other, heard the imperious voice of life: he alone, first, and more solemnly and courageously than any other, has proclamed the divine message of Beauty and of the new aesthetic truth in the Theatre, indicating at the same time the precise and practical way in which to give it form. The sure triumph of his ideal can, naturally, be retarded by opposition; the precision of his ideas can be obscured by sophistries; but life is life, and those things destined to die.... will die.

By this time the very patrons and defenders of the existing Theatre have evidently themselves some sense of its decrepitude and its imminent death. Indeed, only the fear of death can explain all the efforts to return to the conditions of the ancient stage, to the Greek tragedy, to the mysteries of the Middle Ages and so on, and only as fumblings towards a door which shall lead to life can one explain the recourse to the marionette theatre, to the open air theatre, and so on.

But neither the string of the marionette virtuoso nor yet the real rustling of the woods can restore the old invalid, just as its days have not been much

prolonged by those well-known theatres of Stanislawsky at Moscow, of George Fuchs at Munich and by all the activity of Professor Max Reinhardt, who has annexed some of Gordon Craig's ideas, only externally and one-sidedly understood them, and, with great fame and profit to himself has carried them almost all over Europe.

All these things are but the twigs upon the ancient trunk, the flowers upon the old soil. Each improvement and renewal, where it has really been effected, remaining within the false circle of the past, has touched but the exterior part of the theatre while the essence has always remained the same.

Not being a true and independent art and not exerting any power or any talent towards becoming a fine art, the present theatre continues to usurp the place of the true theatre, and retards its renaissance. And more than that; debasing the drama and following the caprices of the Playwright whom it has itself corrupted, it bars the way to the true dramatic poet. And yet more than that; it depraves the taste of the spectators, weakens the value of the theatre as an instrument of culture, and stifles in the public the true conception of the theatre as an art. In fact, were spiritual values as severely scrutinized by men as are moral and material values, the modern theatre would have been long since proclaimed a great public calamity.

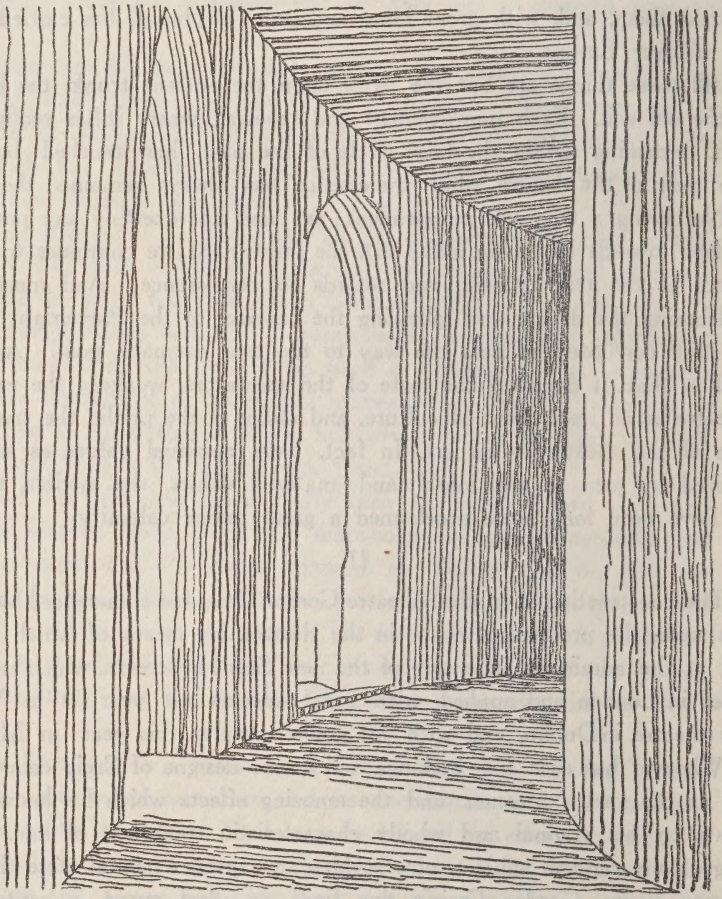
II.

The construction of an ideal theatre Gordon Craig has commenced by experiments upon the problem of space in the theatre, by means of which he has arrived at the admirable invention of the new Scene in screens, which has been exhibited in London and applied with great success last year (1) in W. B. Yeats's theatre in Dublin, and with yet greater results this year in Moscow.

Whoever has seen the etchings and scenic designs of Craig cannot but marvel at the vast expression and the amazing effects which he knows how to create by his original and wholly characteristic treatment of line. Now treating of any random subject, now seeking to express a mental state through the human figure, Gordon Craig's line finds an ideal curve, a contour of extraordinary aesthetic value.

The happy and most rare combination in him of a fine pictorial artist and a great psychologist.... and Craig is indeed a psychologist in the most

(1) This was written in January 1912.



ONE OF THE CURVED PASSAGES IN THE ARENA GOLDONI. *G. NELSON.*

subtle sense of the word.... has converted geometry in his hands into a powerful means for the expression of life; an expression always and equally precise in both its beauty and its inward truth.

In the scenes of Craig the line becomes a kind of living emblem of a motion of the human soul. It is to him what sound is to a Composer.

Craig seems to know an ideal line for joy, a line of anguish, of strength, of hope, of despair, and so on. All those flights of steps of Craig's, those square blocks, the folds, the bands of light and shade, are as living beings assailed by the silence of their tragic life.

Contemplating the lines of Craig is like hearing a Mass by Palestrina, and ever within them there is something musical, a cadence, a rhythm. The least angle in these contours is a movement, a gesture, and each gesture is always in itself Beauty, always a noble attitude in its supreme precision, and one always feels that, before combining and expressing anything, be it what it may, Gordon Craig seeks, by an infallible method, always successfully to determine to what measure of expressive material he must limit himself on behalf of the most ideal visual perception. And this problem is so important, so fundamental that, in solving it, he achieves one of the supreme miracles in the creation of the ideal theatre and in the liberation of the theatre as art.

For the supreme weakness and the supreme error of the stage before Craig's time,... especially of the so-called " realistic stage "... lay in the very fact that it was over-charged with spectacular material, with the massiveness of properties, with the carnevalesque confusion and riot of colours, thus becoming a chaos, which abolished all the laws of theatrical optics, the most elemental rules of Aesthetics.

The inner consciousness of the spectator was compelled to make for itself some deduction from this chaos to carry out individually that creative work which is a fundamental duty of every true art. The imaginative faculty of the spectators, that inner freedom which can never be abolished, was too much oppressed and bound down; attention always wandered, always fixed itself on useless things; and since that which we see with our eyes in the theatre constitutes the greater part of the theatre, all that useless effort wellnigh exhausted the sensitive faculty of the soul to the detriment of the emotions which come through the enjoyment of art although these latter

are the things which, like the miracle of internal light and freedom, we see in the theatre.

Gordon Craig on the contrary, by his treatment of scenes, at last,... and for the first time in the history of the theatre... sets the stage free and lifts every weight and chain from the spectator, opening the spirit wide to the miraculous communion with art and to its divine joy.

When Craig applied his new and entirely right ideas to the treatment of space in the theatre and when he invented his screens the Stage received its definite form, which derives from its very essence, just as the severe and particular form of every crystal is derived from its own nature. He has set free all the potentiality of space as a creative element, all its plasticity, all its infinite mobility. In Craig's hands, Space, ceasing to be a dead thing, has become expressive as a living human face, perhaps even more expressive than the human face. And more than that, it has become a true and important *dramatis persona*, revealing to the theatre and to the dramatic poet unexpected and inexhaustible vistas and possibilities.

This conquest, which, like everything that Gordon Craig creates, is the outcome of experiments and proved by being put into practise, is so fertile in its consequences and so wonderful and important, that of itself alone it suffices to give us full confidence in him both as true reformer and as the only supreme judge of our day in the realm of Theatrical Art.

Yet even this is not all.

According to Craig's plan it is necessary, for the rendering possible of a true theatre as Art, that the problems of light, of movement and voice should also be solved in the same radical manner.

Here also, as in the old scenery, all is chance: very often clumsy, almost always void of sense and of any inward value.

Strange though it may be, the movements of the human face and body, its mimicry, express so little and so badly the infinite variety of the movements and states of our soul that our face can be compared, without much exaggeration, to the glove, which hides all the most delicate and most expressive lines and curves of the hand. And between the human face as it can be and certainly one day will be the difference is as profound as is profound the difference between the face of a black savage and the face of Dante, of Shelley or of Carlyle.

And our voice too, in spite of all the art of theatrical declamation, is perhaps even less flexible, lacking in all expression. In the human voice we distinguish by now the note of determination and of hesitation, that of caress, of love, of strength, of consternation and so on. But continually in our own life there are moments no less important, things no less subtle before which we are almost mute. And the simple flute of a shepherd, or the dead string beneath the bow of Paganini perhaps possesses the gift of human speech in a greater degree than the majority of European actors.

The movements of the race, of the body, our gestures, our voice, are the only means by which we can express ourselves, our will, our soul. And we have no others, and what we have are but too imperfect. And only when those means and methods of expression shall be developed.... and Gordon Craig knows how this may be attained... and only when all the faculties and forces latent in them shall be revealed, will the theatre become a perfect art in all its visible Beauty and in all its internal unity.

III.

All that Gordon Craig has achieved, all that he has proclaimed and never wearies of proclaiming, has long since won for him many friends and supporters, and even imitators such as Professor Max Reinhardt. Both upon the Continent and in England his works have been supremely valued by the leading men in the realm of Art and of Thought. And it seems in truth a strange and most unjust thing that his ideal theatre has not yet become an established fact, but still encounters many enemies and much indifference.

The enemies of Craig are undoubtedly either persons who are not well acquainted with his ideas and aims and thus do not succeed in well understanding them, or they are people who are afraid. Certain writers and actors fear that Craig's work may ruin their art. But the art of a true poet, as that of a true actor cannot, in Craig's theatre, but become more beautiful, more profound and more active. It is dangerous only to false art and to all that is neither a creative gift nor poetry. And Craig's enemies are therefore themselves the best judges as to how far their fear is just.

As for the indifference, it is an indifference, not to the work of Craig

but rather to the theatre in general,.... that sad human indifference to every kind of art. And it must be explained as a general negligence regarding the theatre as instrument of culture and a false understanding of its true essence.

For what, after all, is the Theatre?

" You devote your service to the most useless thing in the world " said the wife of a great artist to her husband.

An enormous majority of the men of today argue like that poor woman, Some look upon the theatre as a fine kind of place to amuse oneself; others hold the theatre as one of the many heirlooms of Greek culture and therefore no essential item in the round of our ordinary daily life.

But the theatre is not merely a house in which to digest sumptuous dinners and to have a good laugh, just as the art of the dramatic poet and of the actor did not spring up for the first time in Greece. For the art of the playwright and the art of stage delivery are, in the same organic way, profoundly inherent in the nature of Man, just as are the faculty of speech, the divine gift of thought, of memory and of imagination; just as is all that Nature has bestowed on men for communion one with another. The theatre is useful or useless to man in the same degree as is useful or useless to us the whole miracle of our art, the whole creative activity of man. And a time will come when the theatre will have the same lofty and noble rank in life as that occupied by the Church, the School, and so on.

Gordon Craig seeks to hasten the coming of such a time. But we must all bear well in mind that the foundation of the true theatre does not rest with, and is not the mission of, Craig alone. The construction of the true theatre is the duty of all men as it is a duty of all to co-operate in the bettering and development of all life, and as we are all in equal degree responsible for the greatness, the beauty and the perfection of Man in ourselves.

Even though men will not lend their aid Gordon Craig will find in himself the strength and means to carry out his work alone. Of this we are convinced by the long years which he has passed in solitary work, almost in exile (and exile is never voluntary); in this we are compelled to believe by the force of his will which may be described as truly British.

But there is a good omen. The Swedish Academy of Science not long since awarded to the Belgian poet Maurice Maeterlinck the Nobel prize. Maeterlinck has somewhat widened the limits of dramatic poetry and divined for himself a new path, while Gordon Craig has erected the whole idea of the theatre as a true art and has opened alike to the theatre and to the dramatic poet the most fertile promise.

Perhaps England also, the Fatherland of progress, will give to its great Son, not a prize, perhaps, but simply the possibility of working and attaining his Ideal ....that experimental School of the Art of the Theatre, without which he cannot, to the full degree, fulfil the commandment of God to man and the supremely sacred duty of the Artist towards LIFE.

SINCE this was written an Englishman has given Gordon Craig this Experimental School of which Dr. Baltruschaitis writes and to which the next chapter is devoted.

In giving this School Lord Howard de Walden does not only confer a benefit upon one man or upon one nation: but by his demonstration of generosity towards this particular Ideal, he as it were gives his hand to those few men and women, whose steadfast enthusiasm for, and belief in, a man and in his losing cause, needed but this first victory to inspire them with absolute confidence in an ultimate triumph.

ILLUSTRATION FROM "THE MASK". VOLUME IV.

THE SCHOOL AT FLORENCE

"THE most desirable thing of all, however, is, under all circumstances to have severe discipline *at the right time, i, e.,* at that age when it makes us proud that people should expect great things from us. For this is what distinguishes hard schooling, as good schooling, from every other schooling, namely, that a good deal is demanded, that a good deal is severely exacted, that goodness, nay, even excellence itself, is required as if it were normal; that praise is scanty, that leniency is non-existent; that blame is sharp, practical, and without reprieve, and has no regard to talent or antecedents. We are in every way in need of such a school ".

Friedrich Nietzsche " The Will to Power ".

AIMS AND OBJECTS.

THE necessity of a School for the study of the Art of the Theatre has been recognized. For some years Mr. Gordon Craig has been elaborating his plan for the founding of such a School.

The project had its inception with him and has grown with him. For many years, in between his other work, he turned again and again to this dominating idea, fixing and refining it, destroying portions and remodelling it until it attained completion and was successfully launched under the auspices of a public- spirited and celebrated Englishman.

The venture is buoyant and afloat, and, briefly stated, its aims are to make a thorough search into the conditions and practise of matters relating to the Theatre, to do what has never been done by any other Theatre, to explore the devious by-ways, to search for beauty and hold it captive, to collect the broken fragments of the Theatre's beautiful architecture and reconstruct the fabric, to unite all the Arts and Crafts of the Stage and achieve harmony.

To make its pulse beat faster and more rythmically and more vigorously, to discover and define once and for all the elemental forms and methods which are the bases and key-stones of the finest Theatre Art and to inspire a new Theatre into being.

ORGANIZATION.

THE School consists of two separate bodies; one body, styled the First Division, is composed of workers and teachers who are at the same time students of Mr. Craig's methods, and who experiment under his direction. Among these are Musicians, Electricians, Wood-carvers, Modellers, Designers, Photographers, Scene-painters, Carpenters, etc., each of whom teaches the others something of his own particular craft, and who is himself taught something by the others.

The other body is known as the Second Division, and is composed of paying students who learn various crafts from the teachers and workers in the First Division. These students are expected to have a good general knowledge, and must be of proved capacity before they will be allowed to join the School.

This second Division was not a part of the original plan of the School, but it has been thought that it will afford an opportunity for a really serious student to gain sufficient practical knowledge to qualify him for paid work in the first Division. Thus the First Division will never have its important labours disorganized by the importation of raw recruits. The accomplished student introduced into the higher division will fall into the work naturally, and find his place in the scheme of things without the least disturbance or friction.

It was essential that the right conditions and surroundings for such a School should be found. England was searched in vain. When it was found that the unique Florentine open-air theatre — the Arena Goldoni, — was available, the idea of taking the School to Italy flowered and bore fruit quickly.

A short experience of the School at work here proves the idea to have been a real inspiration. The Arena is big enough to hold 1,500 spectators. Its stage is larger than those of the average English theatre. Experiments, dancing, fencing, voice training, gymnastics, music, scene painting and craftwork generally, taking place in the sun and the quickening atmosphere, or on the roofed-in stage open to the air, are in the first place healthy, in the second place fascinating.

It is obvious that sane, healthy conditions such as these indicated must re-act beneficially upon the minds and bodies of the workers in the School.

ILLUSTRATION FROM "THE MASK" VOL. V.

THE WORK OF THE SCHOOL.

THE workers and experimenters in the First Division give a portion of their time to teaching each other, and a portion to teaching the pupils in the second division. No pupil is admitted who does not reach the high standard of efficiency required by the regulations. The type of pupil desired is the young man of public school or university education. He will be taught what he has not learned before—namely, a general course in the arts and crafts which should round off and complete him mentally and physically.

All pupils take up the study of speech and movement, and if any student has a talent for, or desire to learn any special craft, he will be given free opportunity.

The subjects of study are as follows: Gymnastics, Music, Voice training, Scene designing and painting, Costume designing and making, Modelling, Fencing, Dancing, Mimo-drama, Improvisation, Lighting Theory, History of the Theatre, Marionette designing, making and performing, Stage Model making—all of which are part and parcel of *Stage Managing*.

All workers and students are allowed to borrow books from the Theatre Library, dealing with various matters relating to the Arts and Crafts, History and Theory of the Stage. The arrangement of the hours and subjects of study has been devised with a view to eliminating the tedious, the unnecessary and the wasteful, and introducing more hand-craft and experience, and stimulating initiative.

A quantity of pupils is not wanted. The choice will be rigorously confined to selecting out of every twenty or thirty talented and educated men who apply, one or two who satisfy the Director's requirements.

There are stricter rules in this school than is usual and yet, at the same time every pupil feels he is " one of the family ".

ERNEST MARRIOTT.

A STUDENTS IMPRESSION.

IT is almost impossible to speak of the work we do here with anything but enthusiasm.

All those who have experienced the delight and excitement of working under the Director are convinced that it was an inspiration to start such a

School in such a place. We are more interested and exhilarated by our work at the Arena than if we were cooped up in an English Theatre in an English City.

We have heard occasional murmurs of surprise that an English venture should materialise in a foreign city.

The answer is, " Come out here ! see our work and look at our magnificent surroundings, and you will never question the instinct that fixed on Florence as a site for the establishment of the School for the Art of the Theatre ! "

There is no staleness here, no monotony, no ugliness, nothing drab, but bright delightful work in a delightful building. One cannot help comparing the green and gold of Florence with the grey and black of London, and thanking one's lucky stars that immortal chance and good fortune has placed us where we are.

I feel that nothing could be finer for one than to feel as we do that physical and spiritual joy which comes from the right use of hand and brain. One understands why William Morris wrote good prose and poetry. He discovered that his creative Literary work was not endangered but improved by his work at the loom, the bindery, the printing-press and the dye-vat. So we too find that to drill marble, model a mask, carve a marionette, saw a plank, paint a canvas, build a model scene or do a hundred other fascinating things, is getting somewhere on the road to achieving a balance. It developes our power of vision.

When you learn to use your hands " craftily " after an ordinary School education which deals almost entirely with " headwork " you find that your outlook on life, and your interest in life, is becoming wider.

One thing helps another. Working at one craft gives a clue to another, working in many mediums opens all the doors of one particular medium, and enables us to approach it from all sides.

Breaking a hole in a wall for the electrician's plugs may at first glance seem to have nothing to do with the Art of the Theatre, but I can assure anyone that if he does it in the right spirit and with the necessary gusto, he will find that it has a very intimate connection with the general work of the School.

We start our day with an Italian lesson—one hour of the beautiful sonorous language.

Whether it is the dry golden air of Florence or the way we are taught I know not, but I do know that already we seem to be able to articulate more clearly and with a greater sense of the music of common words.

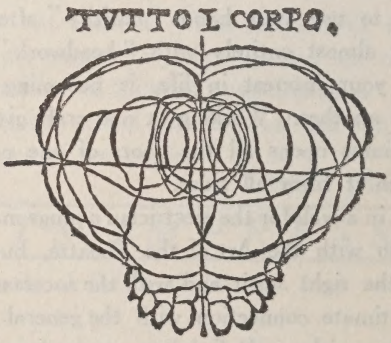
Then we construct models, study lighting, scene-painting, carving, music, costume-designing, performing, etc. — all these either on the stage or in the various rooms set apart for certain crafts. The whole work that is going on is shut off from the outside world, the beautiful curves of the Arena not only serving their purpose of "existing beautifully", but practically shutting out all sound, and enfolding us in a semi-circle of quietude.

When the days are very hot we have a long break in the middle of the day extending into the afternoon, and at night we return to the Arena and charm the Seven Magics out of their hiding place.

The air is cool, the sky is starred, and the Arena gleams whitely against the pure dark blue, except where iron lanterns hung high and low cast a radiance which is reflected warmly on white pillars. There is silence until the notes of an instrument break it....

It is an interesting and absorbing existence. Once having started to learn things in such a vivid and exciting fashion one wonders whether one will ever want to leave School or have anything to do with anything but the Arena Goldoni and the School for the Art of the Theatre.

JOHN NICHOLSON.



Puzzle: Ask your friends to guess who is the Designer of this wood engraving. I think you will find very few who guess aright.

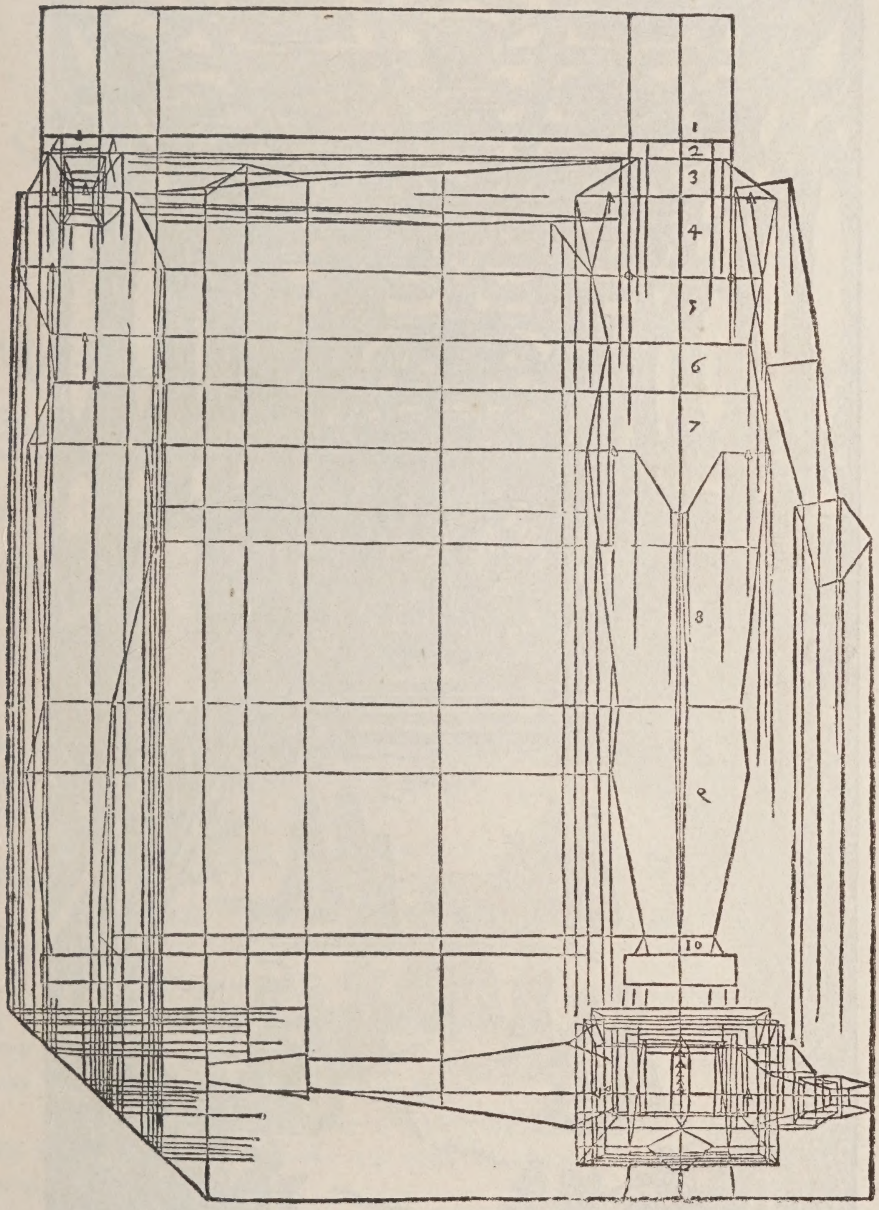


ILLUSTRATION FROM " THE MASK " VOLUME VI.

This was one of the illustrations to an article entitled " Cubism Unveiled " which shows that the cubists are just 400 years too late.

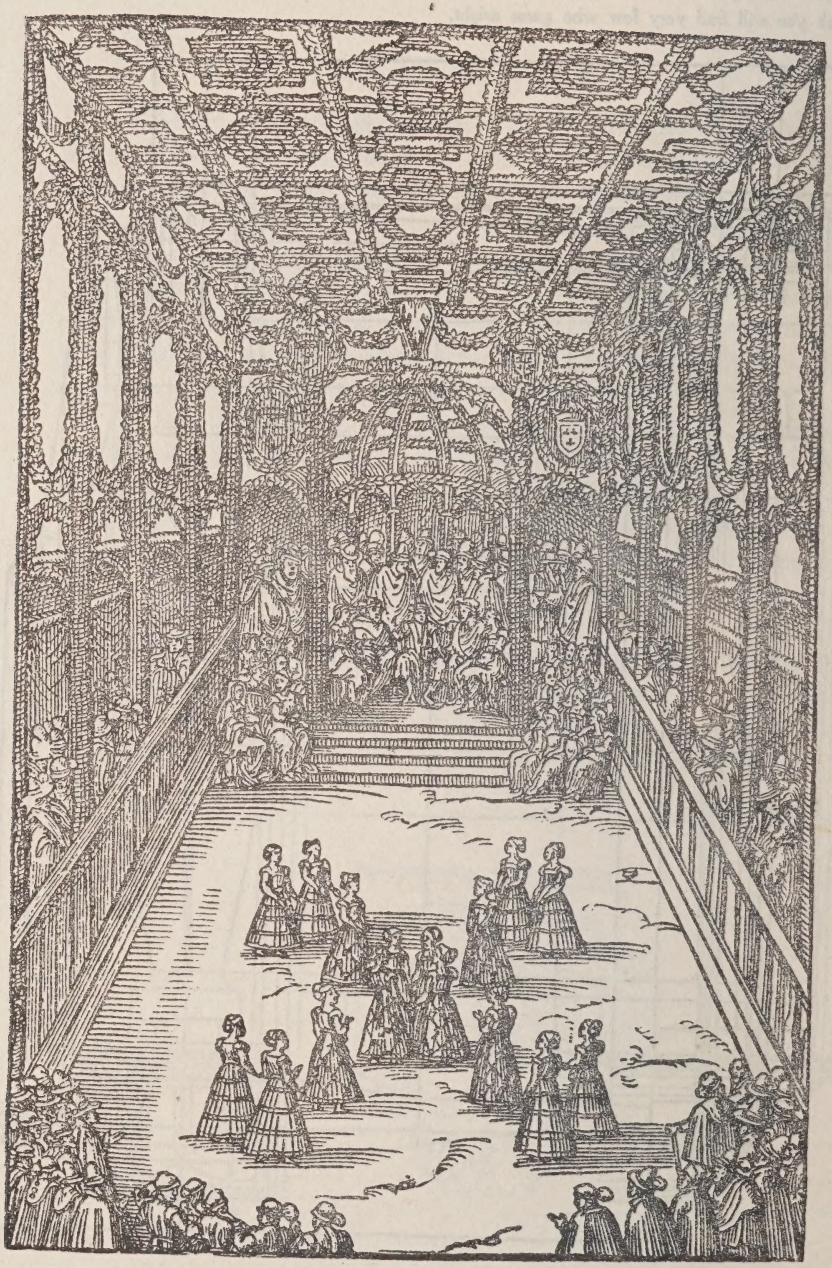
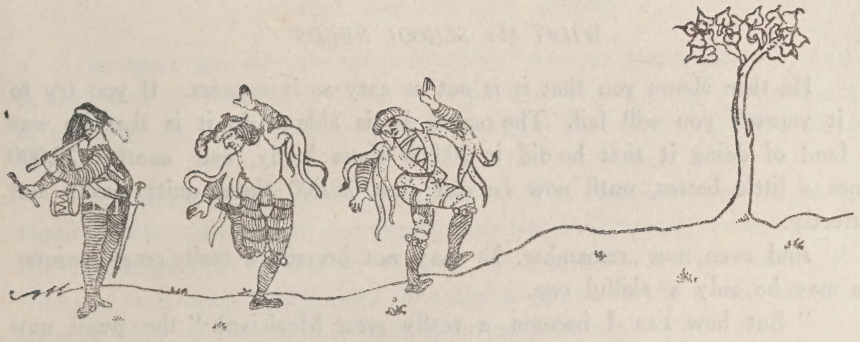


ILLUSTRATION FROM " THE MASK ". VOLUME VI.
Le Ballet des Polonais presented at the Tuileries in 1573.

in which 16 nymphs represented the Provinces of France
[T.L.S]



WHAT MY SCHOOL NEEDS

Sportsmen and Craftsmen. By Edward Gordon Craig.

SPORTSMEN.

"MANY years ago there was a man named Sung who was not very fond of work, but longed to be a Magician and do all kind of wonder ful tricks ».

This is the beginning of a Chinese story.

Sometimes those who wish to learn the magic of an art think it can be learned without being *very fond of work;* whereas there is really only one way of learning Magic—it is to be very fond of work—it is to be passionately fond of work.

A young man once asked Baudelaire how he could learn the magic of writing.

" It depends, " said the poet, " On whether you really enjoy reading the dictionary ".

And all great artists, when asked by their pupils how it is possible to be a magician, answer that it is very easy—that you have only to be very fond of doing one or two simple things over and over again. Does not even the conjurer tell you the same thing?

He says: " It is very easy; you take the shilling, pass it into the hand like this—you shut the hand—you open the hand—you see the shilling is gone. "

He then shows you that it is not as easy as it appears. If you try to do it yourself you will fail. The reason he is able to do it is that he was so fond of doing it that he did it 20,000 times badly, and another 20,000 times a little better, until now he can do it 20,000 times quite easily and perfectly.

And even now, remember, he may not become a really great conjurer. He may be only a skilful one.

" But how can I become a really *great* Magician? " the pupil now asks; and the answer is " Only if you are born a great Magician, whereas anyone may become a Magician—a skilful Magician — if he takes sufficient pains ".

I have said elsewhere that, There are three kinds of workers—workers with the hand, workers with the head, and workers with the Soul; and the qualities of those workers are as different as the earth, the sea, and the sky. That which your hand learns you can teach yourself; that which your head learns you can teach others; and that which your soul learns is God-sent.

It is no use longing to be a Magician without longing to work. A boy or a young man has to realise that an hour's work in a day brings him an hour nearer the state in which he can create—toward the state of the Magician—and that if he works ten hours a day he is nearer that state than the man who works a shorter time.

At the end of several years comes the first glimmering of what one is learning; one does not come to it before then. And if you have worked very hard for many years you will be ahead of your fellows in the race—you will look back and see them behind you.

Can anything be more exciting? it is as exciting as sport—for it is sport.

There are many people who believe that Art is different from Sport, whereas all art is a form of sport. A racer and an artist are brothers. And it is because people have thought that art is possessed of a different spirit from that of true sport, that it has come to be held a commonplace, commercial thing—a thing which all the younger generation are despising.

You must play at Art as you play at cricket.

In sport you do your utmost to beat your opponent, playing according to the rules of the game. But is that the way now; do they do that in painting, in the Theatre, in architecture? No! They do precisely the reverse....

Art is no longer treated as a sport. The antagonists nowadays meet together before the contest and decide how fast their race is to be run—how the distance can be shortened—so that the spectators are not aware of the trick: in fact, they decide how to make it appear to be a real and honest contest, when all the while it is an arranged Humbug.

This has lowered the Standard.

These are the methods of modern Art; and such methods are unworthy of the applause of any nation that understands what Sport is.

I want Sportsmen in this School, and I can then train them to be Craftsmen; and out of these may emerge one Artist. But an Artist who is not a Sportsman is an impossibility—so I want Sportsmen first.

I could almost say that the three requirements for a man of my new Theatre are—First, to be a Sportsman—Second, to be a Sportsman,—and Third, to be a Sportsman.

Bring that spirit with you and you bring me everything—and it brings me what in England we used to prize so highly, " a capacity for sticking to the guns. "

C R A F T S M E N.

To speak of Craftsmen without at the same time speaking of those for whom they are glad to exercise their crafts, would be an omission.

We sometimes feel that the dictum that the public is a fool and has no opinion worth calling an opinion is an over-statement; for we say, " After all, the public has great common sense. "

Yet we exaggerate when we say so, for the public is delightfully stupid. Not foolish by accident—deliberately, delightfully foolish—deliciously wayward— charmingly perverse.

" What does the public want?—Nobody knows! " cry the irate managers.

It never occurs to them that the public is not to be " considered " at

all, and that, strange as it may seem to you, publics do not like being " considered. "

Never in the whole history of Art has good work been produced when the artists have " considered the public. "

There is a vast amount of humbug in this kind of " consideration. " If one is to be robbed of one's money, what does it matter what kind of " consideration " one is shown ?

A good comedian or a first-class troupe of actors give us far more than the public can ever pay them, but you never hear such men talk about " considering the public. " Such men know their public, and they give them good measure.

But the modern Theatre is not in the hands of the few good comedians. It is in the hands of " Managers. "

Hence the really adequate and thorough mismanagement.

The modern Theatre has failed not merely to produce works of art, but to be a commercial success.

It advances the poorest of excuses for its failure. One day it says that the reason for the failure of a Shakespearean production is that it is " above the heads " of the audience. The next day it attributes the failure of a commonplace play to the fickleness of the public.

The public is neither to be blamed for the failures, nor credited with the successes of the Theatre. The public does not want to be bothered by the Theatre. It wants the Theatre to get to work and give a good show, and that without any fuss.

So it is bored by its " Napoleons of the Stage, " by " the latest thing, " by the critics who write with one sympathetic eye on the public and the other spare eye fixed on the Editor. That leaves no eyes for the Art or the Truth—hence the public gets nothing.

I hear someone ask—" Do you really mean to assert that the public likes either Truth or Art—that the public is serious ? "

That is exactly what I do assert, and what I believe.

But by the Public I mean the Majority—I mean the World—and I do not mean those small coteries of dear little people who chatter in drawing rooms day in and day out of what they believe they understand, but who have neither belief nor understanding.

For as there is nothing which needs to be discussed by them their opinion is quite valueless. They will wait until a Whistler comes in before they " discuss " painting; and then, instead of listening, they argue with him; and they give tongue to what they have thought with all the superficiality at their command.

They will wait until a Darwin enters before they discuss Science and they then tell him the laws of nature.

In like manner they will wait till a Duse or a Salvini appears before they open their mouths about the Theatre; and then they begin by questioning all that these masters assert.

Thus when Madame Duse asserts that " To save the Theatre the Theatre must be destroyed; the actors and actresses must all die of the plague ", they raise their eyebrows and look at the wondrous lady as though she were a raving lunatic instead of a woman who has seen, who knows, who wishes to help.

These groups of people almost believe that they control the Theatre and all Art, and that a word dropped by them during a performance will decide the fate of Art and of Artists. They show themselves in the Private Boxes to dictate with all the ignorance they can command. They believe the Theatre is made exclusively for them.

The Theatre is for the People. It should contain one Private Box only—the Royal Box.

The Theatre is for the People and for their Craftsmen.

There are too many Napoleons of the Theatre. It is not Conquerors that are needed, it is Constructors—Builders—Craftsmen.

The announced trimphant tours of the famous Impresarios of Russia and Germany remind us that there remains a great deal of work to be done—and that England must do it. These triumphs are truly Napoleonic, and may be they help the endeavours of the artists who are moving towards a new Theatre. But the new Theatre must build on none but sure foundations. A " Success of the Year " holds little for us to build on, and " the latest thing " is always two hundred years too late. The " Failure of the Year " would hold far more—and the youngest thing has promise.

The Theatres which realise their public best are the smaller and independent provincial Theatres.

By " Independent " I mean Theatres that as yet have not been netted by the trawl-net of the London Managers, but are still free and open in their actions.

They are trying to do something. They are trying to do good work and not merely to please the public.

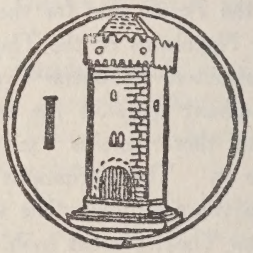
This School wants to help them—and expects their co-operation.

In the near future, States and Cities will select certain representatives, and send them to such a School of Experiment as this one, and support them while they are here—that is to say for about three to six years.

When they leave they will be the School's Representatives They will return to the City or the state which elected them, and establish a School and a Theatre there. These will be directed according to the principles of the Parent School, and thus the main Idea will not become diverted into the wrong channels, nor be broken up into a number of unsatisfactory and minor " ideas "—vague and valueless.

You come to this Theatre to escape from what we call the " modern " Theatre. You come here because the Modern Theatre only wants old-minded men who can supply the demand of those who live, think and feel in " Grooves ", that is to say, like men grown old in heart.

You come here to learn how to create a new demand for the work of Artists, for Craftsmen—and Sportsmen.



THE IDEAL THEATRE

WE believe there is no Ideal Theatre except that which has sprung from the imagination of Gordon Craig.

Having practised for years in the modern Theatre - having been actor stage-manager - decorator - inventor - this artist paused and realised the need for a New Theatre - an Ideal Theatre.

There have been thousands of the other Theatres.

They have failed one and all.

No one in his senses can any longer doubt that for a Theatre to succeed and succeed greatly an ideal standard must be established and faithfully abided by.

Gordon Craig established the Standard. Instantly there were many " adherents " who compromised with its principles and trafficked with the Art while claiming to be faithful to it as Artists.

These can be left to the mercy of the historian.

As soon as Gordon Craig had established the Standard, he set about following his own teaching by taking the longest route possible to achieve his purpose.

This attitude of sterling fidelity to the Cause which he loves, won for him a round of applause from Europe – its advanced Theatres, and its artists.

They celebrated the occasion by a little banquet in London at which all present promised loyalty to his Cause and have ever since been active in furthering the movement.

It was something more than the triumph of a personality that they assembled to celebrate; it was the public recognition and advocacy of a principle.

At this celebration some speeches were made and some letters read from representative members of the European Theatre, and these are reprinted here so that everyone may appreciate the quality of the enthusiasm displayed on the occasion.

Mr. William Rothenstein was in the Chair, and read out the following messages, with some others printed elsewhere in this book.

THE SPEECHES.

MR WILLIAM ROTHENSTEIN: CHAIRMAN.

MISS Terry, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is one of the qualities of fine works of art that when we are under their spell we feel a sense of elation, of added power and of understanding; above all, it seems for a moment as though the curtain were drawn aside and we get a momentary glimpse of the infinite well. As we feel towards sound works of art, so do some of us feel towards sound artists, and I for one can scarcely remember a time when I have not wanted to run along the roofs of the houses crying out, Can't you see? Craig is a wonderful person.

To be one among many, who have felt this equally strongly, is a great delight, and that it should be my privilege to be chosen to express our common admiration for Craig's genius I feel to be a rare honour.

What is it then that we admire in Craig's work, which causes us to place him high above all others of our contemporaries connected with the drama?

First and foremost it is the clearness of his vision.

There is a general idea abroad that Craig, like so many artists, is a vague idealist. Nothing could be more false. It is because people are vague about the great facts of life which artists see with crystal clearness that they consider them to be vague. From the beginning Craig saw that Art to be worthy of the name must in some way represent these great facts of life. The crash of thunder, and the song of the birds, the mountains and plains, the beauty of the face of the world, of man and woman and children, the terrors and joys of life, in fact something of the spirit of all these things must be present in the work of very true artists.

That this relationship to the forces which underlie all existence should likewise be brought into all dramatic representation, if it is to be considered as seriously as the other arts, has been Craig's constant preoccupation. He saw it was this spirit which gave its significance to the ancient art of the theatre, and he has devoted himself continuously, passionately, yet with the utmost patience to trying to bring it back once more into the modern stage

We are met here tonight, then, to acknowledge our debt to him as the one man connected with the theatre who has before him a definite and clear ideal, and to tell him that he has so far succeeded in realising it, that at last the mere mention of his name evokes among people throughout Europe a noble series of images symbolic of a grand significant world.

He saw, too, that the other arts, architecture, music, sculpture, and painting were based upon certain unwritten but precise laws of rhythm and harmony, and that these same laws once existed in the Theatre, but no longer exist there. There is always much talk among critics and dilettanti of going back to tradition, but to which tradition are we to return? Craig might have chosen as so many artists have done to give to his work that superficial resemblance to 17th or 18th century modes, or that flavour of classical archaism by which the more educated public is so readily deceived.

Instead, however, of taking easy short cuts to a fictitious beauty he preferred to say " I dont know, but I am trying to learn ", Above all, he scorned those stupid and empty formulas connected in the public mind with the " poetic drama " which make the light of the stage as grotesque and wearisome as is the sound of the actor's " poetic " enunciation in one's ear.

For him, as for all true artists, beauty is strong, triumphant and clear stirring as the blast of a trumpet. Giotto's tower and St Mark's at Venice are as beautiful in the light of the mid-day sun as they are by firelight.

It has been said many times that the managers have treated Craig very badly in not having made use of his great gifts. The managers on their side say that they would have liked to do so, but that our friend is an extremely difficult person.

I think that is very likely to be true; during the last century, all good artists have been so described, and the reason is not far to seek; the people no longer have the knowledge which enables them to make practical use of sound artists. When work is to be done, bad artists are employed, and as they have not the clear vision I have already referred to, they do their bad work with great skill and ability. The consequence is that, in all the arts, the second-rate men great the great practical knowledge. The experience they gain allows of their giving correct estimates for work required, whether it be of the nature of sculptures, building, or the staging of plays, and managers, public-works departments or private clients, congratulate themselves on the

smartness with which everything has gone off. So accustomed has the public become to this state of affairs that a good artist is by nature supposed to please nobody but one or two rare spirits, to remain poor and obscure, and working for the public is become synonymous with insincere work. If then he suddenly, through some curious accident, does get some public work to do, he has not infinite acquaintance with financial figures which is the better part of public talents. To us, however, Craig has been in the best sense a servant of the public. It is now many years since he first showed us how noble a thing the stage could be; those of us who saw the "Masque of Love ", " Dido and Aeneas ", " Acis and Galatea ", " Bethlehem " and the plays he staged for you, Miss Terry,..... Ibsen's " Vikings " and Shakespeare's " Much Ado ", will not, I think, forget our debt of gratitude to your son so long as we live.

Here was a new and wonderful thing,..... that the theatre should suddenly give us that unity which until then we believed to be possible only in the more generally recognised arts of painting, music, sculpture and architecture.

It was so unexpected, so profoundly moving, that those of us who saw these things have ever since so exalted a view of the art of the Theatre that we find it hard to accept as true coin those pieces which pass through so many of the changers' hands in the booths about the Temple.

Those of us who read *The Mask*,.... and I hope all of us here are subscribers to that unique and inspiring review.... know how ceaselessly Craig has toiled to get to the root, hidden so deeply beneath the ground, of theatrical canons. That they lie entwined among the roots of life itself he has long since discovered. His aim, then, is clear. The Theatre exists to interpret life... life not in the accidental sense in which most people conceive it, but that essence through which all things are made manifest.

Builder, sculptor, painter and musician have worked together to bring the significance of life to bear upon the Church so that when the people wished to commune with their Gods their presence has been felt and their voices heard about them. That the atmosphere of the Theatre should be one and the same and should serve a similar purpose.... *not the purpose of the preacher*, is the object of Craig's labours. This is the end for which he has worked and is still striving; as a man, lost in tortuos caverns suddenly sees

far off a speck of light and knows then he will find his way into the light of the sun so he too is beginning to see a clear way out.

Edward Gordon Craig, we who are met here tonight to do you honour, wish then, not only to set on record our great admiration for the noble work you have achieved, but we wish also to tell you that we have a strong faith in the great work you are doing now and will we believe continue to do as long as you live. We wish you God speed upon your difficult journey, but at least you will know that you have good friends who trust you and honour those great traditions of men's effort to express the divine in life which are older and more glorious than any others.

Ladies and Gentlemen, let us drink to the strength and inspiration of our friend, Edward Gordon Craig.

MR. W. B. YEATS.

MR Yeats, speaking in support of the toast, said " A great age was an age that employed its men of genius, and a poor age one that could not do so. This age found it difficult to employ men of genius like Mr Craig ". (The full report of his speech was unfortunately lost).

MR. MAX BEERBOHM — RAPALLO.

HOW I wish I could be at the dinner next Sunday. When I lived in London it was one of my standing grievenges that Gordon Craig was in Italy. And now that I live in Italy, it is so like him to be in London. I won' t go so far as to say that he never is where he ought to be; for he must always be somewhere, and wherever he is, he is needed. But he is needed everywhere else too. Men of genius are so few; and they ought to atone for their fewness by being at any rate ubiquitous....

Craig's influence *is* ubiquitous, certainly.... festooned from point to point around Europe. But the charming fellow himself, ever as gay as he is earnest, and as inspiriting as he is inspired.... *he* is confined always to one place at a time and I resent that!

However, I don't want to spoil your evening; and with a forced cheerulness but a full heart I raise my glass from afar.

TRIBUTES FROM THE RUSSIAN THEATRE.

DEAR Mr Craig.

Please accept the sincerest congratulations of your Russion friends and admirers, who were fortunate enough to witness the realisation of your artistic ambitions and have shared the joys and disappointments which you felt so keenly in a foreign country.

When you were in Moscow you were always thinking about the theatre of your native land, and your thoughts were always turning to the gates that were closed to you.

Now these gates are opening for you with honour, and today the most brilliant representatives of the English literary and artistic world at last recognise you as a prophet in your own country.

The good wishes of all your friends in Russia are at this moment with you on this day of your long and well-earned triumph.

We rejoice in the recognition accorded you not only in Russia and other foreign countries but in your native land, which you have now at last conquered.

May you have further perseverance to fulfil your mission of beauty.... The beauty which is too subtle and too strange to be appreciated immediately by the throng of ordinary theatre goers, over which your genius hovers.

My wife, my daughter and son write themselves with me in the heartfelt congratulations and greetings which I send.

K. STANISLAWSKI
Director of the Art Theatre, Moscow.

MR. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen. A chance visit to London has afforded me the fortunate opportunity of being present here this evening in my capacity of secretary to the Moscow Art Theatre. Will you allow me, on behalf of that institution and my Moscow comrades, to convey to Mr. Gordon Craig the sentiments of cordiality and gratulation which are shared by all of us on seeing his genius recognised as it should be by his English contemporaries.

The Moscow Art Theatre is proud indeed to have been the first European stage on whose boards Mr. Gordon Craig was able to materialise his artistic vision and to realise on the completest scale possible those ideals which, born in England, were cradled in Moscow. Mr. Gordon Craig was I fear, regarded by a good many of you some years ago as an alchemist searching for a philosopher's stone in the art of the theatre; ....a philosopher's stone that would turn everything to gold. It was the privilege of the Moscow Art Theatre to provide that alchemist with the materials by which the philosopher's stone can be found.

In a few months Moscow, St. Petersburg, and I hope, London will see 'Hamlet' produced in a manner not unworthy of Shakespeare's genius, and a new chapter will be opened in the history of the art of the theatre.

Mr. Gordon Craig, We who have worked with you in Moscow, we who have had the felicity of watching the builder laying the foundations of a new Thespian shrine, shall indeed rejoice if such a Theatre, such a shrine can be materialised here in London.

MICHAEL LYKIARDOPOULUS
Secretary Moscow Art Theatre.

A TRIBUTE FROM THE FRENCH THEATRE.

Craig is a very great artist, and it is a joy for me to see in this country this charming solidarity existing to honour a man like Craig.

YVETTE GUILBERT.

A TRIBUTE FROM THE ENGLISH THEATRE.

I have to go away or I'd much like to have been there tomorrow and helped to give Craig a dinner.... if we'd only ten years ago given him a theatre.... I am a pedestrian person, I always feel, and if I'd met him working I'd have fought and got in his way....: like the blindest,.... but I'd have known what I was fighting.... it was more than ten years back, it was before he went to Germany.... I remember then that I told him he was big enough to steal from.... that's turning out a prophesy. Give Craig, if you remember, my very warm regards.

GRANVILLE BARKER.

GIOVANETTI.

Illustration From The Mask. Volume III.
One of a series of costume designs by Vecellio, 30 of which are to be found in The Mask.

A TRIBUTE FROM THE HUNGARIAN THEATRE.

I think Mr. Craig is the truest revolutionist I have ever known, because he demands a return to the most ancient traditions of which we can dream.

Revolution and revelation are not far each from the other, and he gives us both. His torch, destined to set on fire our pseudo-Theatres, our monstrous and barbarous play-houses, has been kindled at the sacred fires of the most ancient arts. He discovered for us that in a rope-dancer there may be more theatrical art than in an up-to-date actor reciting from his memory and depending on his prompter. I am sure all who are working on the stage throughout Europe, creative minds or stage managers, priding themselves on their being creative minds, cannot be but most grateful to Mr. Craig, and must regard all that is and shall be done in his honour, to be done in the vital interest of the very Art of the Theatre.

For more than a hundred years there have been two men working on the stage, spoiling almost all that is to be called Theatrical Art. These two men are: the Realist and the Machinist. The Realist offers imitation for life, and the Machinist tricks in place of marvels. So we have lost the truth and the marvel of life, that is, we have lost the main thing possessed by the Art. The Art of the Theatre as pure imitation is nothing but an alarming demonstration of the abundance of life and the narrowness of Art.

It is like the ancient example of the child who was trying to empty the sea with a shell, and, as for the wonderful tricks of the machinist, they may be marvellous, but they can never be a marvel. A flying machine is marvellous, but a bird is *a marvel*. To the true artist common life is a marvel and Art more abundant, more intense and more living than life itself. True Art is always discovering the marvel in all that does not seem to be marvellous at all, because Art is not imitation but Vision.

That is the great discovery of Mr. Craig on the stage. He found the forgotten Wonder-land with the Sleeping Beauty; the land of our dreams and wishes, and has fought for it with the gestures of an Artist, with the soul of a child, with the knowledge of a student and with the constancy of a lover. He has done the greatest service to the Art in which we are so profoundly interested, and it is a great happiness for us all that he comes off with flying colours.

He has his admirers and followers in our little Hungary, the whole of the new generation being under his influence, and without any disparagement to the great merit and good luck of Professor Reinhardt, we Hungarians as close neighbours and good observers, dare say that almost all that has been done in Berlin or Dusseldorf, in Munich or in Mannheim for the last ten years is to be called the success of Mr. Craig.

DR. ALEXANDER HEVESI,
Dramaturg-Regisseur of the State Theatre, Budapest.

A TRIBUTE FROM THE AMERICAN THEATRE.

IN this volume " On the Art of the Theatre ", the soul of the theatre is articulate. At last an artist of the theatre has spoken as the authentic critic of its arts—a creator of it. For too long the theatre's art has been interpreted only from outside, by its commentators and purveyors; for the first time, in the fulness of modern experience and prophesy, it is revealed from within, by its artist-expert Gordon Craig, " On the Art of the Theatre ".

In this astonishing volume he pulls the shrill and tawdry play-houses of two hemispheres clattering about our ears in dust-heaps, and from this revolution he rebuilds serene and joyous temples for the aspiring mind. Perhaps no task could be more nobly imaginative and difficult than his—to make clear and comprehensible the outlines of a beauty yet-to-be.

But this task he has well-nigh accomplished in a style so simple, confiding and undismayed, that the reader soon feels himself borne onward, as friend with friend, in charmed conversation. This style, which grants fellowship with such largess, is itself a sign of the seeking, creative spirit which imbues the whole work. Whether we agree with its author in whole, or only in part, or not at all, one startling conviction abides from the reading of this book; that, because of it, never again can we think of the theatre as before.

PERCY MACKAYE.
Author of " The Civic Theatre "
" The Play house & the Play " etc.

A TRIBUTE FROM THE DUTCH THEATRE.

HOW willingly would I serve this prophet as the humblest of his followers! The aim of Gordon Craig to re-create the Art of the Theatre from footlights to frieze, from the costumes to the play itself, is not like the empty boasting one hears from novices who would raise the Theatre from its present supposed decay through the medium of small social gatherings. It is the conscious effort of a man at home in every detail of the difficult trade of the Theatre, who intends to make his dreams of greater beauty in this Art a reality.

At the first glance it seems like a fairy tale — form, light, colour, materials, movements and gesture in harmony with the spoken word, all springing naturally from the action of the drama. This harmony between the visible material form and the invisible inner meaning and essence promises enchantment to those accustomed to the most glaring disharmony in almost every performance, abroad as well as at home. But this vision can become reality — harmony — a working together of all things in all things! In the beginning there will be more sceptics than believers, more who mock than admire, more who oppose it than support it; but the idea of Gordon Craig must and shall be victorious.

If victory does not come now it will do so in the future, in a great measure if not entirely, so that the most obstinate upholder of the present routine of the stage will be forced to accept it — with a good grace or bad. For this reformer does not work for himself, but for the Ideal.

The time was ripe for the Bringer of a new message. He had been long awaited by those who believed and hoped, although none knew where to look for his coming, or what words he would have to say. One day the time must come when things will change. One day Art, and Art alone, from the smallest detail to the comprehension of its entire possibilities, will be the thing considered in the Theatre.

Giant courage, giant strength, and giant perseverance will be needed to turn these thoughts into deeds, and to endure the foolish mockery of those who cannot understand or sympathise, as well as of those who feel their thrones tottering; but what Gordon Craig wills is possible, and therefore it will yet come.

JAN C. DE VOS.

Dramaturg-Regisseur of the State Theatre. Amsterdam.

A PRACTICAL IDEALIST.

ONCE in an occasional blue moon there comes along a strange, fourth-dimensionally minded being, who is neither pure dreamer, nor plain doer, nor alternately and in water tight compartments each of these, but who somehow incredibly contrives to be both at once. A being whose eyes, unwaveringly focussed on infinity, yet see clearly what lies at his feet: so that in appearing cannily to compromise with conditions, he remains uncompromisingly faithful to his vision. A being whom, in a sort of verbal desperation, we attempt to define by a frank contradiction in terms and call a "practical idealist". And when this happens we invariably find ourselves in a quandary; hesitating as to whether, as professing visionaries, to condemn the newcomer's opportunism, or, as practising opportunists, to scoff at his vision, and not infrequently solving the riddle and attempting to dismiss the intruder by doing both. In other words, when a practical idealist comes along, we instinctively assume toward him the attitude of the dough toward the yeast.

And this, or something very like it, is what England has quite naturally and unavoidably been doing for a decade in the case of Edward Gordon Craig, an uncomfortable and disquieting presence in her theatrical and dramatic midst, whom she has self-defensively regarded as a freak while he was proving himself a genius and who has been kept without honour in his own country while first his influence and finally his fame has spread over Europe as at once the most groundedly and provedly practical and the most iconoclastically visionary of stage directors and play producers.

"LIFE."
New York. U. S. A.
1912

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

EDWARD Gordon Craig was born in 1872. In 1889 he went on the stage and acted in Sir Henry Irving's company for about eight years, also playing in the provinces the Shakespearean parts of Hamlet, Romeo, Mercutio, Petruchio, Macbeth, Richmond, Biondello, Master Ford, Claudio, Gratiano, Cassio etc.

Giving up acting in 1896, he turned his attention to the study of stage management and to prepare himself for the task before him.

Early in the nineties he ventured to show his work, and produced Alfred de Musset's "On ne badine pas avec l'amour" at Uxbridge, after which, for several years, he continued his study of stage management. Then followed seven important productions in quick succession, for all of which he designed and supervised the carrying out of every scene and every dress, and acted as stage manager: "Dido and Æneas" in 1900, "The Masque of Love" and a revival of "Dido and Æneas" in 1901, Handel's opera "Acis and Galatea" and a revival of "The Masque of Love" in 1902; and Laurence Housman's Nativity play "Bethlehem", part of "Sword and Song", Ibsen's "Vikings", and "Much Ado About Nothing" in 1903.

"Much Ado About Nothing" was Gordon Craig's last production in England, and he now began to turn his attention to the continent, where, especially in Germany, theatrical people had already begun to alter their style and make it more decorative and, in so doing, to adopt most of his technique.

In 1904 he was approached by Dr. Brahm of the Lessing Theatre, Berlin, and asked to visit Germany, and produced there a German version of Otway's "Venice Preserved", while in 1905 he was invited by another Berlin management on several occasions to produce a number of plays, including "The Tempest", "Macbeth", "Caesar and Cleopatra", but was obliged to break off negotiations.

In 1905 he designed and carried out scenes and costumes for a production of "Electra" for Madame Eleonora Duse; in 1906 he designed scenes and costumes for Ibsen's "Rosmersholm" for Madame Duse at the Pergola Theatre, Florence; and in 1908 negotiations were opened for pro-

ducing " King Lear " at the invitation of the Deutsches Theater. But though the designs were completed these negotiations were broken off. A little later the same management invited him to undertake the production of the " Oresteia , and finally Hoffmansthal s version of the " Œdipus " of Sophocles, which was later seen in London at Covent Garden, but to produce which Gordon Craig would make no compromise.

Early in the same year, 1908, he founded *The Mask*, a sumptuous Journal devoted to the Art of the Theatre published and printed in Florence, Italy. To this Journal, now in the sixth year of its adventurous and successful career, he has contributed numerous designs (his own woodcuts) and writings.

The year 1909 found him entering into a contract with an English play-house to produce " Macbeth ". But though the scenes and costumes were all designed and the models made, he was obliged to cancel the contract in 1911. Meanwhile, however, in 1910 he had been invited by the Directors of the Moscow Art Theatre to visit Russia. After staying a month, he was asked to select a play he would like to produce, and selected " Hamlet ". In 1911 and 1912 he paid three more visits to Moscow to supervise " Hamlet ", which was produced in 1912. Since then it has already been performed 100 times.

Gordon Craig has therefore invented fourteen productions in all, and it is clear from these facts that he would have produced many plays since 1905 for Germans and English had he been willing to compromise, and it rests with his contemporaries or with posterity to say if he was right or wrong to refuse to compromise.

HE has also written and published several books and other writings in which the tendency and spirit of his work are brought to light and his Idea elaborated. Among these publications, the following may be mentioned:

1900. A Programme for " Dido and Æneas ". A booklet with engraved designs.

1902. An illustrated Souvenir Booklet of " Acis and Galatea ".

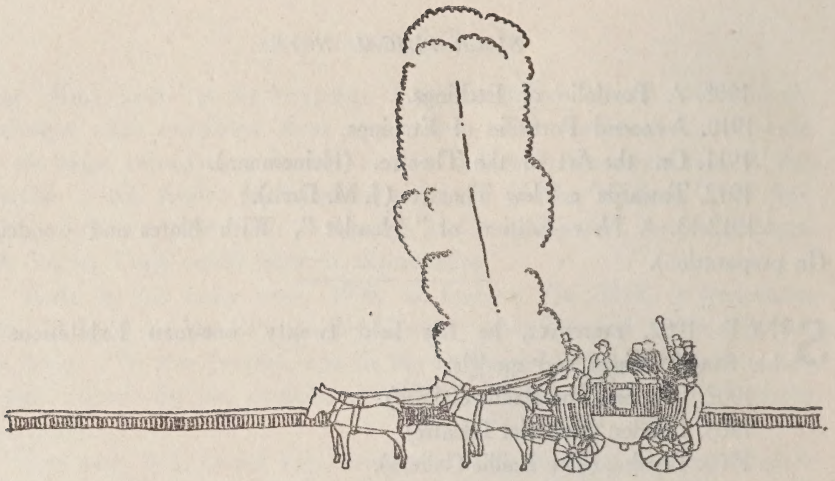
1905. The Art of the Theatre, (Foulis). Published also in German, Russian and Dutch.

1908. A Portfolio of Etchings.
1910. A second Portfolio of Etchings.
1911. On the Art of the Theatre. (Heinemann).
1912. Towards a New Theatre. (J. M. Dent).
1912-13. A New Edition of " Hamlet ", With Notes and woodcuts. (In preparation).

SINCE 1902, moreover, he has held twenty one-man Exhibitions of his Stage designs and models:

1902. London (The Baillie Gallery).
1903. London (Imperial Theatre).
1903. London (The Baillie Gallery).
1903. Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool.
1904. Weimar.
1904. Berlin (Friedman and Weber)
1905. Berlin (Cassierer).
1905. Dresden (Arnold).
1905. Weimar.
1905. Munich (Kunstverein).
1905. Vienna (Miethke Gallery)
1905. London (The Baillie Gallery).
1906. Rotterdam (Kunstkring).
1906. London (The Baillie Gallery).
1906. Florence (De Marinis Gallery).
1911. London (Leicester Galleries).
1912. London (Leicester Galleries).
1912. Manchester (Corporation Art Gallery).
1913. Liverpool (Sandon Studios Club).
1913. Leeds (City Art Gallery).

IN March, 1913, Gordon Craig opened his School for the Art of the Theatre in Florence.



A COACH AND FOUR HORSES

" A HORSE, A HORSE, MY KINGDOM FOR A HORSE ".

OR rather, for four horses—we will give anyone the key to our kingdom for Four Black Horses.

As it may not instantly be clear to you what a coach and four horses have to do with a School for the Art of the Theatre, let me attempt an explanation.

I was descending the hill known as the Costa San Giorgio on a cool July afternoon, when I espied below in the Piazza Sta. Felicita a swarm of excited men, women and children.

On coming down to them I saw the reason of their ecstacy. A handsome young Coach, all yellow and black, stood in the centre of the Piazza, and admiration of its proportions and its colouring filled the air.

It was an English Coach—slim and spruce and dignified. " Prime bang-up "—It looked a jolly thing. I stopped and spoke with the crowd.

" An Inglese had made it "—or " An Italian Count had bought it " and " It was made in Florence "—and " It is quite a strange sight here ! " — many contradictions—no one knew exactly what it was or whence it came. But I felt somehow quite certain where it would go ! !

I asked the proprietor whether it were for sale. Yes, for a few hundred francs.

It was worth at least several thousand francs.

Still, with an unnatural caution bred of difficult times I determined to weigh the matter for a few days. I did so, and then as we closed the

Arena one day on coming out after work I said to some of my men—" Come down and see a beautiful thing that I have found. "

" What is it? " they asked. " A Stetch ", I answered.

This was the name the Italian proprietor had pronounced, and later I found out it was his way of saying " A Stage "—meaning thereby a " Stage Coach ".

So down we went to see the Stetch. It looked even better than before—and I saw the eyes of my companions glittering with the desire of possession. They all clambered on to it and looked it up and down and in and out, and agreed that a few hundred francs was very cheap.

Yet there was hesitation in everyone's manner. So to break that spell—for hesitation is the Devil's own delight—I bought the Stetch then and there.

I sent couriers up to call all the workers in the School together, and in less than three quarters of an hour we were swinging round the town with four nice horses in front of us, our Coach under us, and a sea of Florentine faces amazed or delighted around us.

Then we turned the horses and sped into the country.

And it grew quite clear to me that a Coach is one of those miraculous necessities which always drop down from Heaven if one has the wit to wait underneath and seize the moment, and that it will be a source of health and inspiration to us all. Yet what is a coach without horses?

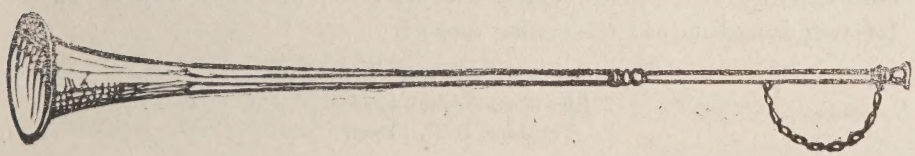
Still we await a second inspiration from the clouds, and every day look to see whether the Four Black Steeds have been signalled.

There must be a number of horses eating their heads off in high Olympus—or even lower down in the plains of Piccadilly.

We have christened her " The Arrivederci ",—or in slang English " The See-You-Later. "

So with a blast of the horn we leave you, and disappear down the road in a cloud of dust.

E. G. C.



PROPAGANDA

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ADVERTISEMENT and Propaganda differ in this respect; that whereas Advertisement is made solely for the sake of pecuniary profit, Propaganda is made for the sake of a doctrine or principle.

Thus when Mrs Pankhurst on behalf of Women's Suffrage sends out ladies and gentlemen to hold placards in the street calling for " Votes for Women "—or when the Lady Buckingham or Lady Brownlow Cecil, on behalf of Queen Alexandra's Charity send out others to hold placards asking —" Will you buy your rose from me?—it is Propaganda in each case.

When Mr. Selfridge puts up a placard saying " Will you come and take a cup of tea in the roof garden ", it is Advertisement. He has not paid for this one.

PROPAGANDISTS FOR THE NEW THEATRE.

It is not illegal to desire to give England a new Theatre. Craig has already given his idea to the Germans, and they have developed it along lines somewhat similar to those he laid down in 1900—5. Since then his Idea has grown. It has taken on a graver and vaster form. It is this later development you must advocate.

To do so you have only to become a member of the Society of the Theatre, which is allied with the School for the Art of the Theatre and " The Mask ".

JOIN THE SOCIETY OF THE THEATRE. IT ASKS FOR ONE MILLION MEMBERS. THE YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION IS ONE SHILLING.

Come forward as a loyal supporter and active Propagandist of this new and uncompromising Ideal for the Theatre, and of this man whose " tremendous challenge to the whole purpose and practice of the Stage as it is " calls for your immediate and unwavering support.

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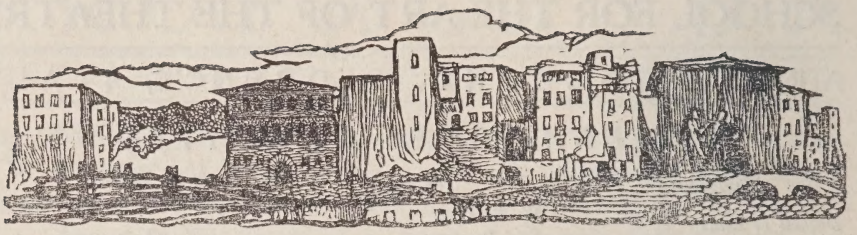

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Panoramic view of Florence 1490. Francesco Rosselli facing page 5
(Special folding plate)

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To future times it will be clear that Mr. Craig's real work was that of the prophet, the mouth through which the dawn of the new art of the theatre made its music.... All his work, however, practical or prophetic, will tend in the same direction; the vindication of an art of the theatre which is an art distinct from the other arts which it employs, and the rescue of that art from the barren search after the imitation of nature ".

The Times.

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ATHENAEUM 1913.

He would get a wider and more considerate hearing if he were more patient; but then, if he were more patient, he might be less inspiring, less provocative. To be inspiring and provocative is his mission. There is no keeping pace with him.... it will be difficult to exaggerate the influence of Mr. Gordon Craig on the theatre of Europe.

THE TIMES 1913.

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